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The Nation.

April 11, 1981 $1

EDITORIAL

THE LIBEL EXCEPTION

There were a few murmurs from the nation's press about the size of the judgment Carol Burnett won against *The National Enquirer* for falsely depicting her as having been boisterous in a restaurant. Richard Cohen of *The Washington Post* called the $1.6 million damage award "a concoction based not on any finding of malice or even real damage to Burnett." But there has been no outcry about the First Amendment issues the case raises. The libel laws are "fair and balanced," *The New York Times* editorialized, "except perhaps in the eyes of those who recognize no libel, no matter how damaging, and place no value on reputation."

But it is quite possible to value reputation and still oppose libel laws. The great majority of those whose reputations are defamed find that a libel suit is not a realistic remedy. It publicizes the defamation; it is expensive and time-consuming; it exposes the victim of defamation to embarrassing cross-examinations, and, if one loses, the libel has been validated.

It is possible that the jury award was so large because Burnett was seen as a surrogate for many other stars defamed by *The Enquirer.* While that suggests that rough justice was done, it also underscores another argument against libel laws. They are a blunt instrument that can be used to punish expression by those who are out of favor, political dissenters as well as tawdry gossip publishers.

But our major objection is that the First Amendment prohibits *all* laws abridging freedom to speak or to publish. Whenever a restriction on expression is proposed—on grounds ranging from obscenity to national security—the argument is made that the First Amendment can't be absolute because libel laws are permitted. Libel is the exception that admits far more dangerous rules.

COMMENTS ON RACE & CLASS
Roger Wilkins
Nathan Huggins
Herbert G. Gutman
Aryeh Neier
Herbert Hill
Hulbert H. James

THE C.I.A. AND EL SALVADOR
Ralph McGehee

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Michael Parenti

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BACK ON THE AISLE
Richard Gilman

TOWARD A BLACK POLITICS

BEYOND THE RACE-CLASS DILEMMA

MANNING MARABLE

At the dawn of the twentieth century, W. E. B. Du Bois predicted with grim accuracy that the central crisis facing the world during the next 100 years would be "the problem of the color line—the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea." A brilliant social scientist, researcher and political activist, Du Bois devoted more than seven decades to patient investigation into what was once termed "The Negro Problem." But in 1953, nearing the end of his long and productive career, Du Bois observed, "I still think today as yesterday that the color line is a great problem of this century. But today I see more clearly than yesterday that back of the problem of race and color lies a greater problem which both obscures and implements it: and that is the fact that so many civilized persons are willing to live in comfort even if the price of this is poverty, ignorance and disease of the majority of their fellow men." Thus, the burden of racial prejudice or racism was fundamentally a problem of class exploitation.

The question of whether it is race or class that lies at the heart of the inferior status of blacks broke out most recently in the October 5, 1980, issue of *The New York Times Magazine.* Carl Gershman, a former Fellow at the neoconservative Freedom House and now counselor to United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, was assigned the task of presenting the case for a class analysis of black social conditions. Black psychologist Kenneth Clark, author of *Dark Ghetto,* was asked to discuss black socioeconomic inequality as a function of race prejudice.

(Continued on Page 429)

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LETTERS.

TAKING CUBA SERIOUSLY

Amherst, Mass.

I recently returned from my first visit to Cuba, as part of a tour connected with a University of Massachusetts anthropology seminar, and read with some dismay the account by Joe Flaherty of *his* trip to Cuba ["Windows on the Third World," *The Nation*, Jan. 3-10]. Flaherty is amusing, though superficial, about the tourist fare, hotels and entertainment, and misleading when he notes that for his group "wandering was not encouraged." We had no trouble "wandering," making spontaneous contacts and unplanned visits (e.g., I saw a poet at home, and also found a Yiddish library and shul). What pains me most is that the article's rather patronizing tone may encourage a view that this poor, embattled, but (yes) noble country's fate does not have to be taken quite seriously.

The piece fails to mention the real achievements of the revolution and totally disregards the seriousness of the U.S. threat to the country. On the first point, measured against Caribbean and Latin American realities, the advances in health care, education, housing, raising the cultural level, addressing racism, providing food and clothing (albeit rationed), should earn the regime high marks. On the second point, what new can one say? Our blockade has been disastrous to Cuba; Russian aid has been their only way to survive. As a consequence, an Eastern European version of socialism is being created (or imposed)—with all the problems that suggests.

What are the alternatives for beleaguered Cuba? Our record of intervention and intention is painfully clear. If there were no Soviet presence, especially in the Reagan-Haig period before us, another invasion might well occur—with a consequent blood bath that would make Chile and El Salvador seem like preliminary events. Conversely, because the Russians are there, one can imagine the new Administration *choosing* this area for some dramatic confrontation. The worst scenario I envision is that *this* time the Kennedy-Khrushchev face-off of the 1960s would be carried to its horrible conclusion.

In the light of all that, the Cuban situation is arguably much more significant than the Flaherty piece implies or seems to care about.

Jules Chametzky

FLAHERTY REPLIES

New York City

Mr. Chametzky, obviously unable to float his dreary valentine to Cuba on any of the belles of Amherst, took the occasion of my article on a bizarre tour to that island (nothing else intended) to burden *The Nation*. His prose—"Flaherty is amusing, though superficial" (humor always is to the driven pure), and "this poor, embattled, but (yes) noble country's fate" (catch the throaty treble in the "yes")—is just part of his problem.

Since Chametzky longs for more solid stuff, let us proceed. While citing advances in health, education, feeding and sheltering, he never mentions a disastrous economy, constant crop failure and a soaring rate of alcoholism. He tells us of his casual visits to a poet's home and a shul as if free artistic expression and religious practice were commonplace. Nothing could be further from the truth. He rightly cites American interventionism but never mentions "blood baths" arranged by Russia, Cuba's landlord, in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, and the current menace to Poland. Nor does he question why Cuba, with all its problems, is spending its energies in Angola and Ethiopia. Such musings would muddle the ideological waters of the revolution.

The truth of the matter is that after twenty years under Castro, Cuba does not have free elections (as promised), an opposition party, a free press, a free church, or a free trade union movement, making it the most suppressed of Russia's satellites. Those who fostered such "unrevolutionary" notions are found, if they are found at all, imprisoned on the Isle of Pines, along with those who are sexually out of sync. But perhaps Chametzky, like William Kunstler, chooses to think of such places as "political reorientation centers."

Piddling human liberties never flutter in the true revolutionary breast. The grand design is all. The world always has had "revolutionaries" such as Castro and the Rev. Jerry Falwell.

Joe Flaherty

ARAB-AMERICANS

Washington, D.C.

The newly established Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Senate Judiciary Committee presents a clear danger to the civil liberties of one group of Americans—unfortunately ignored in Victor Navasky's article ["Security and Terrorism," *The Nation*, Feb. 14]. The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (A.D.C.) fears intensified repression of Arab-American political activists at the hands of this new creation of Judiciary Committee chairman Strom Thurmond.

In the past six months, A.D.C. has received reports which point to a campaign of Federal Bureau of Investigation harassment and intimidation of Arab-Americans, with the implication of an identity between being pro-Palestinian (or pro-Arab) and being pro-"terrorism." While not as intense or as frightening as "Operation Boulder" (in 1972, when Arabs and Arab-Americans were subjected to a wave of interrogations, deportations and other intimidating practices resulting from a Nixonian Executive Order), reports and affidavits have been filed noting more than 100 incidents of F.B.I. visitations and/or acts of harassment or intimidation. In each instance reported to us the subject was the political activity, association, or beliefs of members of our community.

And now comes the Reagan Administration's announced campaign to "root out" and "eradicate" the "number-one menace to humanity"—terrorism—which the Administration identifies as being closely linked with the Soviet puppets: the Palestine Liberation Organization and Libya.

This has been followed by the creation of the new Senate subcommittee and the naming of the head of the Justice Department's Foreign Agent Registration Unit as the subcommittee's chief counsel. The Foreign Agent Registration Unit has frequently been used to harass and/or smear Arab-American political activists.

It is not the "left" that is the intended target of the new Senate subcommittee and other latter-day "witch-hunters." In the political demonology of the day, "the foreign threat," "the terrorists," "the corrupters" and "the threat to our society" are perceived of as coming from Palestinians or Arabs in general (read: OPEC, Islamic fanaticism, etc.) and their American supporters.

Dr. James J. Zogby
Organizing Director
American-Arab
Anti-Discrimination Committee

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The Nation is available on microfilm from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Publisher, Hamilton Fish

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The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for the first week in January, and biweekly in July and August) by Nation Enterprises and © 1981 in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10011. Tel.: 212-242-8400. *Subscription Mail Address:* Nation Subscription Service, P.O. Box 1953, Marion, Ohio 43305. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. International Telex: 667 155 NATION.

Regular Subscription Price: One year, $30; two years, $50; six months, $15. Add $5 per year postage for Canada and Mexico; $7 other foreign. All foreign subscriptions must be paid in equivalent U.S. funds. **Please allow 5-7 weeks for all subscription transactions.**

EDITORIALS.

The Monster In Our Midst

The attempted assassination of President Ronald Reagan marks the fourteenth assault on the life of an American President or Presidential aspirant (two were directed against President Gerald Ford). Four of them were successful. Three Presidential aspirants, including Huey Long, were targets. In no other Western nation has the life of the head of state been so perilous. (We are also the only society that has a steady diet of mass murders; assassination attempts are only the tip of the iceberg.)

In this century virtually all of the deeds have been done by a procession of psychopaths, shrewd enough to outwit the Secret Service but mad enough to make a bid for glory by slaying the leader of the tribe. Taken as a whole, they have not been after political power, Brutus-style, but rather have been a breed of alienated grudge-bearers, hatching twisted schemes in lonely hotel rooms, seeking self-transcendence (or immolation) in a blaze of nihilism.

What is it in our society that encourages the sick among us to act out their power fantasies with such tragic results? If, instead of sounding the ritual denunciations of the monster in our midst, we could seriously pursue the answer to that question, perhaps we would learn something important about our society, our culture and politics.

Still, for the short run, there are some obvious things to be said. We could not help but notice, for example, that the only public figure who did not perform the ritual hand-wringing was the President himself, who grinned (we can assume) the old seamed grin, however weakly, and told his wife, "Honey, I forgot to duck," and who begged the surgeons: "Please tell me you're Republicans." The President, before his collapse, acted as though he were a featured guest at a Friars Club roast, and one half-expected to read that upon awakening from the anesthesia he had quipped: "Where's

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the rest of me?" His resilience, relief at being alive, grace under pressure—whatever it was—provided a brief celebration of the tenacity of life and a reassuring glimpse at an appealing aspect of Ronald Reagan's character.

Nevertheless, more needs to be done toward reconciling the conflict between the freewheeling, gregarious style of our politicians and the requirements of security. Accommodating the demands for an open political style by leaders in a democracy with the need to guarantee the safety of our charismatic pols is the kind of short-run problem that may require a long-run trial-and-error solution. But an immediate and overdue step would be to pass national handgun control legislation—favored, according to the polls, by a majority of the population—which seems to gain a place in the bipartisan agenda only after assassination attempts.

The most irrelevant comment we heard on the day of the shooting came from a spokesman for an anti-gun control group, who was quoted as saying that since Washington already had strict laws, the incident was proof that gun control doesn't work. Gun control laws in Washington or New York City or Detroit can never work so long as handguns can be purchased at a pawn shop in one state and transported to another. Handgun controls won't solve the problem, but they would begin to reduce the risks. Ironically, the one Federal agency that deals with the interstate arms traffic —the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms—is slated for a severe cutback in the 1982 budget. Opponents of gun control, like John Connally, who told a television interviewer that more "discipline" was needed, in the sense of swifter, sterner punishment of all criminals, ignore the irrational component in assassinations and, indeed, in most of the murders in this country. An available gun transforms violent emotions into deadly action.

There is another and perhaps more portentous lesson, and it has to do with, to paraphrase another of the President's quips, "Who's minding the button?" A brief news item, buried among all the post-assassination-attempt verbiage, reported: "The black briefcase that holds codes needed in the event of a nuclear war remained near President Reagan after he was shot, a White House spokesman said." The what-ifs such information conjures up are left to the reader, but they could be continued beyond the operating room itself, to the postoperative hospital bed, where the President was given a narcotic painkiller. When Dr. Dennis O'Leary, the George Washington University Hospital spokesman, was asked if the President would be able to make "a decision of state of some significance," he replied: "We believe that he would be able to do it." It's nice to know what Dr. O'Leary believes (although the Constitution might require a second opinion), but that doesn't make us feel any better about what that black briefcase symbolizes.

The constitutional problems of "Who's minding the store?" are tricky in the case of an incapacitated President. We cannot forget how Secretary of State Alexander Haig suddenly materialized, like an apparition from Nixon's final days, to announce at a nationally televised news conference that he was in charge—behavior that we may expect the pundits (not to mention the psychiatrists) to elucidate in the days ahead. If Haig could make such an appearance on television, one does not need the help of drugs to imagine him appearing in the operating room—or at a hospital bedside—and offering to mind the black briefcase.

Such a scenario may sound like the melodramatic stuff of a television mini-series, but it is standard operating procedure in what E. P. Thompson called in this magazine the nuclear "Satanic Kingdom." This episode of the black case demonstrates that the overriding issue is not the mechanics of transferring Presidential power but the power itself—the power to exterminate hundreds of millions of people at the press of a button. This power is too much to be placed in the hands of one vulnerable 70-year-old mortal, however tough; too much indeed to be placed in the black briefcases of leaders of posturing superpowers. The attempt on the life of the President reminds us once more of the fragility of life on this planet in the absence of nuclear disarmament.

Another Budget

The attempted assassination of the President interrupted the Senate's deliberations on the new budget. The debates resumed, of course, but the occurrence at the Hilton Hotel will now play an incalculable role in them. A public outpouring of sympathy for President Reagan may well provide Congress with an impetus to give him his proposed budget more or less intact, but we would hope not. For the sweeping social changes concealed in the blizzard of figures, cuts and new appropriations unleashed by David Stockman & Co. represent a radical departure from the progress, however halting, this nation has heretofore made in providing for its needy and directing public funds for public good.

We are only beginning to grasp the import of the Administration's crusade to "get the government off our backs." We know generally that the fiscal 1982 budget contains a large deficit, despite the renewed prosperity the supply-side tax cuts are supposed to engender. When this rainbow fails to yield the promised pot of gold, the shortfall will be that much larger. We also know that spending for arms will increase enormously. We are aware that the rich will benefit, while the social services that make life less desperate for the poor will be sharply cut. And we can be quite sure that the President's program will scarcely touch inflation.

Yet the myriad ways in which the budget-writers' hardboiled fantasies will actually affect people's lives and alter the priorities of the American political economy are still imperfectly understood. The Administration has seized the advantage, even though its budget is a confession that it has no answers to society's real problems. The Democrats are dared to come up with something better at a time when voter sentiment seems strongly anti-spending. Given this public mood, the Democrats have shown little heart for a fight. Their strategy seems to be to niggle a bit but basically to let the Administration have its budget, then run against it in 1982 and 1984 when its failings become evident.

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This is a dubious tactic, and a game we refuse to play. Fortunately, there are alternatives, and we would like to draw your attention to one group's proposals. They are contained in papers by seven scholars who constitute the Budget Study Group of the Institute for Policy Studies, and have been assembled under the general title *A Balanced Budget for the People: Comments on the Reagan Budget by the Budget Study Group of the Institute*. Despite being under fire these days—notably in a scurrilous novel called *The Spike*—the I.P.S. has continued to go about the honorable business of a think tank, and has come up with a detailed critique of the Reagan budget that points the way to an alternative, socially responsible, *balanced* budget. We shall publish Robert Engler's contribution on energy in its entirety next week; herewith a kind of preview of the other papers, which may be ordered for $6.50 per copy from the Institute for Policy Studies (1901 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009).

As Prof. William Cannon of the University of Chicago writes, the Reagan budget is "the trick of the year, the successful sell of an unbalanced budget as a Budget Cutting Program." Terming the Reagan budget unbalanced both "financially and in terms of good social policy," Cannon notes that the U.S. Government spends a smaller percentage of the national income than any of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development nations and "less on the poor"; it has a "tax burden far lighter than most," and a productivity rate that is among the lowest. This leads to the Reagan budget's dismal paradox: "At the same time [that] it increases the needs for social services, it reduces the outlays for social services 20-25 percent."

Cannon demonstrates the possibility of a balanced budget for the 1981-82 fiscal year that is neither "hypocritical" nor "cruel." But, he says, the trade-offs necessary to achieve this would then be revealed and would negatively spotlight the "issues of social balance," which are "concealed or ignored" in the Reagan budget. In his statistical tables, Cannon dissects policies that are often foolish when they are not cruel.

Most of these mean-spirited reductions of services would probably be made anyway—on principle—but they are doubly necessary in the mad world of Reaganomics because without the cuts the large increase in arms spending would pump up the deficit still more. It is on this unhealthy growth that Marcus Raskin focuses.

Raskin proposes cuts in detail, from various weapons systems to bases overseas (how is our "national security" enhanced by bases in Korea and the Philippines, for instance?), and of course he challenges many of the assumptions of the grand strategy. In the area of nuclear weapons, we continue to edge up to the dreadfully destabilizing first-strike capability. In Europe we are still running the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (at an annual cost to us of more than $65 billion) as if this were 1953. And so on around the world as we strut the earth as its nervous policeman. If ever a term needed rigorous redefinition, it is "national security," and Raskin makes a good start by casting a cold eye on the Pentagon's grandiose figures.

Within the range of governmental activities dealing with energy, housing and community development, health, education and transportation, the term "regressive" applies most forcefully. Separate I.P.S. papers show that cuts in the budgets of departments dealing with these areas are radically inequitable.

As Prof. Chester Hartman makes clear, this is nowhere more striking than in housing, where new construction was declining at an alarming rate because of high interest rates even before the slashing of Federal support for housing in the Reagan budget. The result of the tightened squeeze will be accelerated disintegration of housing and neighborhoods and, in Hartman's words, "planting social dynamite in our cities that will explode sometime during this decade."

In the matter of health care, the effect of the Reagan budget's sharp pinch will be to advance the date when the nation must choose between two altogether different systems. "At stake," writes Sander Kelman of Cornell University, "is whether health care is to be a service or a business." The present hybrid, the result of "the extravagant fancies of doctors, hospitals, nursing homes and insurance," will fade and largely be replaced by either a corporate or a socially oriented system, in which case "the present medical establishment will lose their control," Kelman says. Nonetheless, the possibility of a national health service replacing the present system depends on the medical establishment's support. Those who oppose the corporate alternative must therefore "bury the hatchet" and "seek that support," he writes.

It is in the field of education that the class bias of the Reagan budget shows up most clearly, according to Martin Carnoy of Stanford University. He notes the curious fact that, after the predictable cuts affecting education for the poor and handicapped (including bilingual programs), the next group to suffer will be the middle class, the supposed heart of the Reagan constituency. The shift in Federal aid will be toward higher-income families and to subsidize private schools.

As for transportation, the Reagan policies amount to "supply-side diseconomics," in the words of Elliott Sclar of Columbia University. He highlights the fact that their effects will be negative for fuel conservation and destructive of the public-transportation infrastructure that is essential to the whole economy. Nowhere in the massive tinkering of the budget cuts is the notion that all economic activities are best left to be "bought or sold in the marketplace" more inapplicable or quite as foolish.

The Institute for Policy Studies papers on the Administration's 1981-82 budget, department by department and function by function, add up to a devastating indictment. Masquerading as prudent economizing in the interest of all Americans suffering from inflation, its real purposes are ideological, aiming to shift the burden of the society ever more unfairly onto those least able to bear them.

COMING UP

Fred J. Cook on Natural Gas Decontrol:
The Next Inflationary Catastrophe

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VARIATIONS.

CALVIN TRILLIN

Some misgivings about the Reagan Administration that have been collecting in my mind since January 20, the Night of the Minks, were underscored the other day by the twitchy little misspeech on the order of Presidential succession presented to White House reporters by Alexander Haig—now known in Washington as Old Number Three. As it happens, one of the concerns was this: if General Haig is so smart, why did he finish 214th (out of 310) in his graduating class at West Point? Does that mean that there are 213 generals his age who are smarter than he is? If so, why didn't we win the war in Vietnam? Think about how many Vietnamese generals there must be who are smarter than he is. Of course, it's always difficult to make comparisons between disparate cultures, but according to my figures—arrived at through some complicated computations based on extrapolations of Pentagon body counts divided by cost-plus defense contracts—the man in charge of our foreign policy would have finished 845th in his graduating class if he had attended the Haiphong Technical Institute. The man who finished 844th, I am told, is now a street-sweeper in Namdinh.

I realize, of course, that there is no exact correlation between class standing and intelligence; it is only as a matter of rough perspective that I find it helpful to keep in mind when dealing with doctors that precisely 50 percent of them finished in the lower half of their class in medical school. Still, I have to admit to feeling a bit uneasy about having the State Department run by a man who was outperformed by two-thirds of his peers at West Point—an institution whose academic rigor was once summed up by its description as "the fifth best high school in Orange County, New York." My concern is hardly dissipated by knowing that the Secretary's number-two man has testified to a Senate committee that he thought Zimbabwe was a town in the San Fernando Valley, somewhere between Tarzana and Canoga Park.

Then there is the matter of what effect Mrs. Reagan's ballgowns will have on supply-side economics. David A. Stockman, television's favorite wonk-zealot, has assured us that when the income tax cuts go into effect taxpayers are not going to heat up the economy by using their extra cash to buy even more of the plastic doodads Mr. Reagan's principal supporters are trying to sell them. Instead, loyal Americans are going to invest in American industry so that, say, Detroit automobile manufacturers can buy some spanking new machine tools for turning out precisely the sort of car they believe to be appropriate for today—probably, judging from their past performance, something like a 1948 Hudson Hornet. It's perfectly obvious to me, though, that Mrs. Reagan is just going to take her tax-cut money and buy a lot of ballgowns. Mrs. Reagan has always struck me as someone who is strictly on the demand side. Her spate of ballgown buying, of course, will simply cause more inflation—meaning that the retired person living on a fixed income of a pension supplemented by Social Security can no longer count on getting a Dior original for $8,000, and will either have to dip into principal or eat cat food.

I suspect that Stockman himself may be tempted to use his tax-cut money to buy a new blow-dryer and some aviator glasses. I wouldn't be surprised, in fact, to hear that he has his eye on a couple of pairs of designer bluejeans. We have to face the fact that inflation is simply too much money chasing too few goods, and, as John Maynard Keynes once said, whenever either one of those elements is in designer jeans, the wonks are in control.

Little things keep nagging at me: Why have I already forgotten the name of the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development? Did the generals in charge of our military assistance program in El Salvador finish above or below Haig at West Point? If President Reagan intends to run the country like a corporation, could it be the Chrysler Corporation he has in mind? Is it really possible that I'm beginning to miss Billy Carter? Could that have been my voice I heard mumbling "Come home, Bebe Rebozo—all is forgiven"?

I might as well admit that I find troubling implications in the personal financial problems facing John McAtee Jr., of Greenwich, Connecticut, who was chosen by President Reagan to head the Federal synfuels corporation at a salary of $150,000 a year, plus fringe benefits—a salary, he testified to Congress, that he would find it virtually impossible to live on. Giving us a clue as to how the Reagan Administration might define the phrase "truly needy," McAtee said that his acceptance of the synfuels job might mean that he would have to move out of Greenwich. What troubles me is the thought that everyone in Greenwich who is pulling down less than a hundred and fifty a year might have to move out, particularly after the ballgown inflation starts. I can picture them piling cashmeres and Betamaxes and tweed sports coats into their station wagons and heading west in caravan, like some preppy version of *The Grapes of Wrath*. What effect will it have on the fuel supply in the northeast corridor? How about traffic on the Merritt Parkway? Will the Greenies, like the Okies, all end up in California—so that a place like Burlingame or Pasadena might find itself glutted with more stockbrokers than it can safely absorb?

It may also be that I am still troubled by the pre-inaugural description of President Reagan's more belligerent foreign policy advisers as "a bunch of nuke-nuke jokes." Any fears I might have had along that line were intensified, of course, by the first public address given by President Reagan's national security adviser, Richard V. Allen Inc. Allen deplored the tendency of appeasers and nervous Nellies and that crowd to slip back into accepting the old "better Red than dead" line. Allen is, of course, entitled to make his own personal judgment on the *Red* v. *Dead* issue, but, given his proximity to the button-pusher, his statement made me feel like a passenger on a 747 who has just heard the pilot announce his intention to land on schedule at J.F.K. no matter what those sissies in air traffic control keep saying about fog and ice and wind-sheer. Given my own choice, I don't really mind being stacked up for a while.

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ARTICLES.

FOREIGN POLICY BY FORGERY

The C.I.A. and The White Paper On El Salvador

Because the author of the following article was employed by the Central Intelligence Agency, he was required to submit it for pre-publication review. The Agency was most cooperative in expediting the process; however, it insisted upon a number of deletions, which are shown in the text. We have joined the author and the A.C.L.U. in a lawsuit protesting these deletions as an unreasonable prior restraint. The suit requests that the court order the Agency to permit publication of the article in its entirety. —The Editors

RALPH McGEHEE

Efforts of the Reagan Administration to transform a popular revolt against a ruthless U.S.-backed oligarchy in El Salvador into a challenge to the United States by the Soviet Union and its allies are reminiscent of many of the techniques used in the past by the Central Intelligence Agency to deceive world opinion. Where the necessary circumstances or proofs are lacking to support U.S. intervention, the C.I.A. creates the appropriate situations or else invents them and disseminates its distortions worldwide via its media operations.

A prominent example would be Chile. Salvador Allende's Government was avowedly leftist, but it had come to power through legitimate elections. U.S. policy makers felt they could not tolerate the existence of another Marxist government in Latin America and initiated, through the C.I.A., a multi-year effort to overthrow Allende. Disturbed at the Chilean military's unwillingness to take action against Allende, the C.I.A. forged a document purporting to reveal a leftist plot to murder Chilean military leaders. The discovery of this "plot" was headlined in the media and Allende was deposed and murdered.

There is a similarity between events that precipitated the overthrow of Allende and what happened in Indonesia in 1965. Estimates of the number of deaths that occurred as a result of the latter C.I.A. **[one word deleted]** operation run from one-half million to more than one million people.

Ralph McGehee worked for the Central Intelligence Agency from 1952 to 1977, serving in Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. While with the International Communism Branch of the directorate of operations for the C.I.A., he specialized in Communist terminology, techniques and modes of communications. He was awarded the C.I.A.'s Career Intelligence Medal.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the Indonesian Government was racked by an internal struggle between the U.S.-backed military establishment and the multimillion-man-strong peasant-based Communist Party of Indonesia (P.K.I.). President Sukarno ruled by balancing one side against the other. The Agency found Sukarno's independence unacceptable and first attempted to overthrow him in 1958. The Agency established a field headquarters **[four words deleted]**, training bases **[three words deleted]** and activated airstrips unused since World War II. It gathered vast stores of arms and equipment, arranged with the U.S. Navy for submarine backup support and acquired a fleet of B-26 bombers, from which all identifying markings were removed. (These B-26s served the Agency well and later passed back and forth among the C.I.A.-run airlines for operations in **[two words deleted]**, the Bay of Pigs and Vietnam.)

The Agency chose **[four words deleted]** as its vehicle for overthrowing Sukarno, and armed tens of thousands of their subordinates. Infantry attacks were launched against Government positions in Indonesia's outer islands. Bombing runs in support of the attack were flown by B-26s piloted by Americans under contract to the C.I.A. After some initial gains the rebels' progress slowed and the struggle dragged out. One of the American pilots was shot down and captured, and the Agency's role in the operation was exposed. This embarrassment, plus the lack of results, forced the C.I.A. to halt the insurrection. What that massive military campaign was unable to accomplish was achieved later by a simple C.I.A. **[one word deleted]** operation.

In 1965, another opportunity to overthrow Sukarno's Government presented itself. This time the Agency was ready. Late that year, a dissident group of leftist military officers attempted a coup against the U.S.-backed Indonesian military establishment, and succeeded in murdering six top military officers. Unfortunately for the plotters, General Nasution, who was also marked for assassination, escaped and with another army officer, General Suharto, rallied the army. With the army's backing, they defeated the coup and then ousted President Sukarno. The Agency seized upon this opportunity and set out to destroy the P.K.I.

Initially, the Indonesian Army left the P.K.I. alone, since it had not been involved in the coup attempt. **[eight sentences deleted]** Subsequently, however, Indonesian military leaders **[seven words deleted]** began a bloody extermination campaign. In mid-November 1965, General Suharto formally authorized the "cleaning out" of the Indonesian Communist Party and established special teams to supervise the mass killings. Media fabrications played a key role in stirring up popular resentment against the P.K.I. Photographs of the bodies of the dead generals—badly decomposed—were featured in all the newspapers and on television. Stories accompanying the pictures falsely claimed that the generals had been castrated and their eyes gouged out by Communist women. This cynically manufactured campaign was designed to foment public anger against the Communists and set the stage for a massacre.

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The extermination began in late 1965 with the arrival of paratroopers in Central Java. Target lists compiled by the military were given to right-wing Moslem groups. Armed with parangs, they were transported in army trucks to villages where they "killed with bloody mutilation," according to a later report. Schoolchildren were asked to point out "Communists," and many of those identified were shot on the spot by army personnel along with their whole families. Many of the denunciations were false, the result of spite and personal disputes. The word of a single accuser was sufficient to impose a death sentence. The killing was on such a huge scale that there were sanitation problems in East Java and Northern Sumatra, where the smell of decaying flesh was pervasive and the rivers clogged tight with the dead.

The number of people killed in the Indonesian blood bath has never been established, but an official estimate was made in October 1976 by Admiral Sudomo, the head of the Indonesian state security system, who said that more than 500,000 had been slaughtered. Independent estimates run to more than one million.

To conceal its role in the massacre of those innocent people the C.I.A., in 1968, concocted a false account of what happened (later published by the Agency as a book, *Indonesia—1965: The Coup That Backfired*). That book is the only study of Indonesian politics ever released to the public on the Agency's own initiative. At the same time that the Agency wrote the book, it also composed a secret study of what really happened. **[one sentence deleted]** The Agency was extremely proud of its successful **[one word deleted]** and recommended it as a model for future operations **[one-half sentence deleted].**

In his book, *Inside the Company*, Philip Agee, a one-time C.I.A. case officer in Latin America, describes numerous deception operations in which he was personally involved. Among them was the forging and planting of documents to defame political opponents, or to discredit Communist diplomats. The forgeries enabled the Agency to manipulate public opinion in these countries and create a hospitable climate for U.S. policies.

What the United States is now attempting to do in El Salvador is merely a reflection of what the United States has done in many countries of the Third World. While proclaiming its good intentions and decrying the threat to its national security, U.S. policy makers have imposed unpopular governments and shored them up with armies, police and weapons. Hiding its goals under the rubric of fighting international Communism, or, as the current phrase has it, "international terrorism," the United States supports minority landowning autocracies and their military subordinates against the interests of the masses of people.

United States policy makers have determined, like the colonialists who preceded them, that it is cheaper and more advantageous to reward richly a small oligarchy than to provide modest economic gains for total populations. These U.S.-backed rulers then allow U.S. corporate domination of the raw materials, markets and labor forces of their nations.

The United States justifies its support of autocratic regimes with the claim that they are necessary to achieve modernization and to halt the spread of international Communism (or international terrorism). The repressive autocracies are only temporary, it is claimed, and after a period of sacrifice, the lives of the people will be enriched through modernization.

Saving people from Communism and modernizing their economies are honorable goals. But when the United States controls the lives of these people for its own selfish benefit, and when this is achieved through support for despotic regimes, the stigma is considerable. To avoid this stigma, the Agency generates propaganda that labels all opposition

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movements as Communist or terrorist. When the evidence does not support those claims, the C.I.A. manufactures the appropriate "proof."

A report published by the Catholic Church accurately describes the cause of opposition to the Government in El Salvador. This report, dated February 13, 1979, contends that the major problem in Latin America is abysmal poverty and brutal oppression, which has made life on the continent a "type of abomination." The Church denounced repressive military governments and authorized its priests to help fight for justice. The Pope gave his full backing to the statement. Statistics published by the United Nations document the falling standard of living in an already impoverished Latin America and name El Salvador as the poorest country in that region.

Former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White stated that he had been forced out of the Foreign Service for opposing what he called President Ronald Reagan's "ready-made doctrine" of military intervention in El Salvador. He said the greatest danger in that country came, not from the leftist insurgents but from rightist forces allied with the U.S.-supported military regime. Ambassador White opposed military aid to the Salvadoran Government and said that the weakened guerrillas are no threat. Military equipment being supplied by the United States would be used "to assassinate and kill in a totally uncontrolled way," he said. The chief killers of Salvadorans are the Government's security forces, who probably were responsible for the murder of four American churchwomen and for the execution of at least 5,000 leftists and those merely suspected of being leftists.

The C.I.A.'s first efforts to distort the truth about El Salvador were confined to reporting massive arms shipments to Salvadoran leftists from the Soviet Union, Cuba, Bulgaria, Vietnam, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Ethiopia and Nicaragua. They had united in an international conspiracy against the United States, it was alleged. The conspirators were careful, however, so the story went, to provide only arms of Western manufacture. The impact on the American people of the story was diminished somewhat by the murders of the four American churchwomen, and the Carter Administration announced that it was stopping U.S. aid until the culprits were apprehended.

A second probable C.I.A. deception operation was devoted to bringing about the resumption of that aid, laying the groundwork for President Reagan's "ready-made doctrine" of military intervention. On January 19, 1981, newspapers in the United States published accounts of a guerrilla invasion force of from 100 to 1,000 men that had presumably attacked from Nicaragua. Although the reported battle between those invading guerrillas and the Salvadoran security forces lasted all day, the Government troops failed to kill any guerrillas, capture any prisoners, or recover any weapons. A second sea raid was reported on January 22—again without casualties or prisoners. This was considered sufficient evidence, and on January 24, the United States signed a $65 million aid package with the Salvadoran Government. On January 29, two Salvadoran Government officials resigned, charging that the two "invasions" were staged in order to justify the sending in of American troops.

A third probable C.I.A. deception operation was undertaken to prove Communist arms shipments to the leftist "insurgents." On January 16, four days before Reagan's inauguration, a State Department official, Jon Glassman, was sent to El Salvador specifically "to look into foreign intervention." Glassman could find no evidence that any weapons had been delivered or shipped. As he was about to leave, the National Police gave him eighteen pounds of documents captured in two separate incidents. Miraculously, the documents provided ample proof that the Cubans and Russians had supplied weapons to Salvadoran insurgents. This "proof" constituted 70 percent of the evidence for the State Department's white paper documenting Soviet and Cuban arms aid. [See James Petras, "White Paper on the White Paper," *The Nation*, March 28.]

Although Soviet or Cuban support to leftist movements in Latin America may occur, it has generally been impossible to document. While I worked for the C.I.A. in the International Communism Branch (I.C.B.), various officials pressured that office to produce studies on Soviet and Cuban assistance to Latin American political movements. During my four years with I.C.B., from 1973 to 1977, other than information **[twenty-two words deleted]**.

So it is indeed miraculous that with the advent of the Reagan Administration, documents were suddenly found "proving" not only support from Cuba and the Russians to El Salvador leftists but also linking virtually all of our perceived enemies in one massive international terrorist conspiracy. Those happily acquired documents can only be the product of yet another C.I.A. forgery operation. □

MARXISM AND HISTORY

We Hold These Myths to Be Self-Evident

MICHAEL PARENTI

The noted anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski, writing about the Melanesian Islanders, observed that a myth is not an idle tale but a powerful cultural force. The myths of creation, clan and totem, he said, served to legitimate the existing distribution of wealth in the society. Far from being innocent stories, myths taught acceptance of the prevailing property arrangements—to the benefit of the more prosperous property-holders.

And it was Sigmund Freud who wrote in *The Future of an*

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Illusion that every culture seeks to defend itself: "Its organization, its institutions and its laws"—and, one might add, its myths—"are all directed to this end: they aim not only at establishing a certain distribution of property, but also at maintaining it."

So even those who work outside a Marxist paradigm will sometimes chance upon truths that are greater than their particular perspectives and end up saying more than they intended to say. Freud has no class analysis. For him, individuals float about classlessly in space and are acted upon by a reified culture which just seems to exist of its own accord. And Malinowski never applied his class analysis of Melanesia to the English society he lived in. (If he had, he would never have got tenure.) Yet these non-Marxists, looking at a reality which Marx did not invent but only discovered, come up with some of the same truths. And when they do, they sound like Marxists.

Keeping in mind Malinowski's notion of what myth really is, what are the myths of American society? What are the mystifying social images and tales that seek to legitimate existing political-economic relations? It would be something of a myth and illusion to expect me to analyze all of them in a single article. So let me select several major areas for comment.

First, there is the myth of pluralism, sometimes called "democratic pluralism," so that it might stand in contradistinction to "totalitarian Communism." Celebrated in our mass media and universities, the myth of pluralism teaches that power in American society is widely distributed. All important interests have their say and get their way—at least some of the time. No social group or class predominates over another. Policies are formulated and decisions are made through a multilateral interplay of interest groups. The government acts as a mediator of these conflicting demands, a referee that seeks to develop a consensus.

According to pluralism, power is curbed by elections and a free press, by the pressure of public opinion and the desire of officeholders to get elected and re-elected, and by a system of governmental checks and balances.

One of the leading "group theorists" back in the 1950s, a social scientist named Earl Latham, gives us a priceless description of the United States as the "one pluralist world." For Latham, American society is

> an aggregation, a collection, an assemblage, a throng, a moving multitude of human clusters, a consociation of groups, a plurality of collectives, an intersecting series of social organisms, adhering, interpenetrating, overlapping—a simple universe of groups which combine, break, federate and form coalitions and constellations of power in a flux of restless alterations.

This undulating image of society—sounding more like a group orgy than a group theory—begs the whole question of structured, institutionalized class power.

Michael Parenti is the author of Democracy for the Few *and* Power and the Powerless *(both St. Martin's Press). He is currently writing a book about the mass media.*

Within the last twenty-five years there has emerged a whole body of literature which challenges this mythical vision of American society. The antipluralists, composed of various radical, socialist and even some left-liberal writers, argue that government most often represents the privileged few, not the needy many, that power is highly structured and institutionalized, controlled by the same class interests in diverse institutions, and that the *diffusion* of power does not mean the *democratization* of power.

Thus you can have a diffuse array of groups situated in such varied places as the Pentagon, the scientific and academic establishments, the large corporations, the media and in Congress, a supposed pluralism of "autonomous" interests, yet all of them work in perfect orchestration to increase the military budget and propagate the imperialist, interventionist interests of the ruling class. "Interpenetrating," "overlapping," indeed, Professor Latham: they are all in bed with one another.

The critics of pluralism also point out that the electoral system is rigged by the two-party monopoly, with laws designed to stymie radical third parties, while the monopolized mass media and big-money contributors offer us Tweedledee and Tweedledum—and occasionally, as with John Anderson, Tweedledoo. All of which does not add up to democracy.

Some of the critics also note that democracy is not merely a matter of formalistic elections but of *substantive outputs*. Democracy is more than a decision process, it is a whole social order. In a real democracy the land, labor, capital and resources are used for the needs of the people and not as grist for the capitalist mill. With unemployment, inflation, recession, poverty, malnutrition, and with the crises in transportation, health care, education and in our cities and on our small farms, we cannot talk about democracy in any substantive sense.

The capitalist system has its own fundamental myths. They are mainly the myths of the Lockean ideology, such as the myth of individualism which reduces human community to a conglomeration of competing, atomized persons, each plotting his or her own gain, manifesting a loyalty to nothing but the cash nexus. And somehow the whole thing comes out for the better for everyone, thanks to Adam Smith's "invisible hand"—an invisible hand that has us all by the throat.

In addition, it has been preached for the last 200 years in Western society that these grasping, competitive, atomized social relations are the "natural" ones for human beings—even though through most of history, in most lands, most people had never heard of, and would not have dreamed of, organizing society in the way capitalism has done, and would have regarded such social arrangments as not only strange but profoundly inhuman.

The Lockean myths get woven right into our language. Consider, for instance, the way capitalism reverses the role of producer and parasite. In an earlier day, it was assumed that those who produced the property were the producers.

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Even as late as the 1790s, the term "manufacturer" meant worker, literally, he who makes things with his hands. Today the title belongs to the owner—who not only expropriates the worker's labor but even his name. Creation used to denote ownership; now ownership signifies creation. Thus we speak of corporations as "producer interests" when in fact they produce nothing. They are organizational devices for expropriating and controlling wealth.

Consider also the myths of imperialism, which reverse the roles of victim and victimizer. The colonizer becomes the "peacekeeper," the colonized the "violent" ones; the imperialist carries the "white man's burden," while the exploited are now the "beneficiaries"; the imperialist destroys ancient and fragile cultures and calls himself the "civilizer," while the indigenous peoples are called "savages."

The myth makers of American imperialism will sometimes allow that other countries have been harsh in their dealings with non-European peoples, but the United States has always been benign and helpful—which would certainly come as a surprise to the American Indians, Mexicans, Cubans, Filipinos, Nicaraguans, Haitians, Vietnamese and others who have suffered the special attentions of U.S. imperialism.

One of the imperialist myths I would like to draw attention to, because of its special importance today, is the myth of the Giant Red Menace. Not just the ordinary Red Menace but the *Giant* Red Menace. The ruling class has a difficult time convincing the American people to send their sons off to die in foreign wars, support a huge military establishment and do all the other things necessary to make the world safe for Exxon, Chase Manhattan and I.T.T. So the elites tell us that these interventions are for the "national security" of the United States, for the survival and well-being of us all.

Yet it became harder and harder to convince the people that the tiny Vietnamese nation was a threat to U.S. security. The image of the Vietnamese getting into their PT boats and crossing the Pacific to invade California is one that even Ronald Reagan couldn't sell. So the capitalist propagandists in the government, the military, the media and the universities conjure up the image of the manipulative giant power and the puppet regime. When asked in 1968 why we were in Vietnam, Secretary of State Dean Rusk said it was to stop the Chinese. The Vietnamese, supposedly, were China's puppets. Now that China, driven by its obsessive anti-Soviet phobias, pursues an overtly pro-fascist foreign policy, the cold-war propagandists once more focus on the Soviet Union.

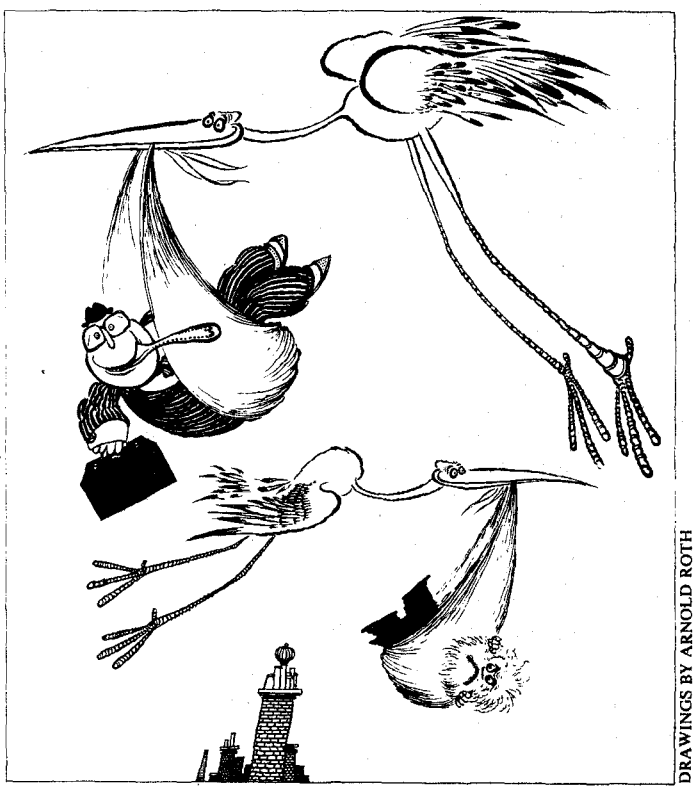
We are asked to believe that Angolans, Mozambicans and others have faced death and destruction in valiant armed struggles not for their own interests but because they are the mindless puppets of Moscow—a racist image that the neocolonialists find easy to believe but which a reflective person would find incredible.

When Angola was liberated by MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) forces, Senator Daniel P. Moynihan announced that the Atlantic was being turned into a "Soviet lake." And other hawks in Congress, faced with the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua, alerted us to the notion that the Sandinists were the puppets of the Cubans who, in turn, were the puppets of the Russians.

The goal of this sort of propaganda is to deny that the primary conflict in the world is between the United States and the liberation forces of Third World nations; instead, we are taught that the primary conflict is between the United States and the U.S.S.R. Not American multinational corporate imperialism but "Soviet expansionism" is behind it all.

More recently, Secretary of State Alexander Haig, with a generous assist from *The Washington Post, The New York Times* and other media guns, and unburdened by any need for evidence, conjured up the specter of a Moscow-directed network of "international terrorism." The purpose is to justify the Reagan Administration's attempts to crush a popular insurgency in El Salvador and make that country and others safe for what Haig calls "democracy and free enterprise." "International terrorism" replaces "international Communism" as the monolithic menace that justifies political repression at home and repressive interventionism abroad. By activating this latest Red scare, U.S. leaders also conveniently disregard the U.S.-supported military terrorism that is an everyday feature of right-wing, pro-capitalist dictatorships throughout the Third World, from Argentina to Indonesia to Turkey to Zaire.

Within ruling class circles there are differences of opinion. There are conservatives who complain that U.S. policy has been plagued by softness and lacks guts and all the other John Wayne virtues. And there are liberals who say we are foolish and too reliant on military solutions. We should be more flexible and co-optive when advancing the interests of the United States (read, U.S. capitalism), they say. I maintain that U.S. policy is neither weak nor foolish,



DRAWINGS BY ARNOLD ROTH

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that it is rational and quite successful in reproducing the conditions for the continued international expropriation of wealth, and that while it has suffered serious defeats and will suffer more, the people who run U.S. foreign policy know what they are doing and why they are doing it.

If the mythology seems irrational, this does not mean the policies it seeks to justify are irrational in terms of the class interests of those who propagate such policies. This is true of domestic myths and policies as well as those in the field of foreign policy. Once we understand this, we move from a liberal complaint to a radical analysis. We understand how seemingly irrational notions and arrangements, ones that are harmful, wasteful, indeed destructive of human and social values—and irrational from a human and social viewpoint—are not irrational for capitalism because they serve its interests. Capitalism has no dedication to human and social values. It has no loyalty to anything but itself. And once we understand that, we can see its cruel rationality.

Sometimes what we see as irrational is really the discrepancy between what the myth wants us to believe and what is true. But again this doesn't mean the interests that are served are stupid or irrational, as the liberals like to complain. There is a difference between confusion and deception, and a difference between stupidity and subterfuge.

Thus, we should become increasingly aware of how these various myths interlock. For example, as the economy falters, domestic legitimations wear thin and contradictions become more glaring, there is a conscious reactivation of Cold War II and the Giant Red Menace. The people keep drifting off into reality, worrying about jobs, inflation and the like. They must be strenuously brought back to face the harsh illusions of the ruling class, a class that cannot solve the problems of capitalism and so must conjure up external threats and irrelevant enemies. At home, the enemies are racial minorities, "subversives" and welfare recipients. Abroad, the enemies are the Russians and their "international terrorist" network. And so, as capitalism demands greater supports but fewer regulations from government and greater sacrifices from the rest of us, we see a revival of classic Lockean ideology and the myth of a purer, earlier Adam Smith system.

At the same time, of course, the dominant class denies the existence of these myths as class myths and represents them as a reflection of reality or as a product of our culture. But myths are not just cultural products. Strictly speaking, a culture does not produce anything but is itself a product of social forces. Myths and beliefs are mediated through a social structure. You don't just catch a belief as you would a cold or a mood. It must be transmitted through some social agent—parents, the media, churches, schools and universities, publicists, the law-enforcement establishment—or contracted through social experience. There is, then, a material and social dimension to the propagation of myths, and therefore, a class dimension. Here I would have to quote Marx's memorable observation: "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas. . . . The class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production."

The durability of these myths rests not only in the superior propaganda resources of the ruling class but in the way capitalism can control our material environment, our social behavior and our options even when we don't want it to. Thus there are people who work for profiteering businesses, who have their labor expropriated at unsafe jobs, who eat unsafe foods, breathe filthy air and live in substandard houses, not because they are brainwashed by myths and don't know any better but because they have no choice. Hence, along with a counterpropaganda or demystification, we need political action also. We need to organize around the right causes and take action on issues so as to expose not only the myths but the powers behind them.

Here, then, is what must be done: First, challenge the myths of capitalism, expose them and demolish them at every opportunity. Second, always point out that they are more than silly lies or even foul deceptions: they are weapons of the ruling class, containing within their irrationality *a rational class control function*. In that way we also expose the human irrationality of the capitalist rationality, and we move from a liberal complaint about bad conditions to a Marxist analysis about the system that feeds and needs these conditions.

Third, we must not only deal with the content of myths and their class control function, we also have to grapple with the ruling-class distortions hidden in our very language and vocabulary, in the concepts and images we use. We have to struggle to gain control of the means of *mental* production. Consider terms like "stability" (whose stability?), or "defense," or "national interests," or "national security." Let's dwell at some length on two terms in particular: "extremism" and "moderation." The political terms left, center and right refer to the political spectrum, a spatial metaphor used to signify one's position on equality, change and social justice. Now, placed on this linear spectrum, there can be an extreme left and extreme right, but an extreme center would be only a contradiction in terms, the extremes of the center being nothing more than the beginnings of the "moderate" left and right.

But "extreme" has another meaning as when denoting something excessive, intransigent, dogmatic and even violent. And "moderation" also has this spatial meaning as in a "moderate distance," a "moderate amount," and a moral meaning as in "fair-minded," "balanced," "given to compromise," "not given to excess." Yet in truth it does not follow that those who occupy the extremes of a linear political spectrum must be extremists in the pejorative sense. Nor does it follow that those who occupy the center are incapable of immoderate, brutal and repressive actions.

I remember during the antiwar movement when many were beaten by the police in demonstrations. They were called the extremists because they wanted an end to an unspeakable war, while the people who called in the police to attack them were described as the moderates. The truth is the demonstrators were not the extremists, they were the sane and sensible

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ones. The extremists were, and still are, in power.

It was not right-wing fascists who ordered the saturation bombing of Indochina, who devised the water torture, the Phoenix assassination program, the tiger cages, antipersonnel bombs and napalm. It was the "moderates," the best and brightest of the political center.

Now, more than ever, our efforts must be devoted to exposing the myths of the ruling class. More than ever the elites are forced to distort, distract and conjure up irrelevant enemies at home and abroad. And more than ever, as capitalism continues to choke on its own contradictions, they will show they have no loyalties to anything but their profits and plunder.

In this struggle, we as Marxists pledge our lives and our sacred honor. For if being a Marxist means anything, it means having a devotion to the truth, a commitment to social justice and a love and respect for the human community. □

Race-Class

(Continued From Front Cover)

Gershman's approach to the crises of black unemployment and discrimination was not very different from that of Daniel Patrick Moynihan; indeed, he begins his article with a defense of Moynihan's 1965 report, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, which suggested that there was a "tangle of pathology" in the social fabric of the ghetto underclass. Black intellectual and activist protests against the Moynihan thesis "were frequently couched in radical-sounding terms," Gershman observed. "The sad irony in all of this," he went on, "is that what appeared to be a form of racial militancy was, in reality, a policy of racial accommodation. The new approach both rationalized and subsidized the underclass's continued existence." Gershman argues that Black Power was in effect an elitist movement which allowed the new black professional and managerial elite to become power brokers between the state and a permanent black underclass. He applauds the thesis of University of Chicago professor William Julius Wilson "that in the modern industrial period, unlike the earlier periods of slavery and industrialization, class plays a more significant role than race in determining a black's position in society." He concludes by observing paternally that "the crisis within the black movement" is related to the utter failure of a generation of black activists to comprehend what basic economic problems exist within their own ghetto.

Ironically, Kenneth Clark in his "rejoinder" found that he had much in common with Gershman on the race-class issue. Clark agreed with Gershman that the Black Power movement and demands for black community-controlled schools were strategies of "racial accommodation" and neo-Booker T. Washingtonism. "While having some temporary cathartic value," he noted, Black Power "did not improve by one iota the educational and economic status of ghetto-entrapped underclass blacks." In short, both authors were confirmed integrationists on the question of black-white alliances. Both rejected categorically the idea that an autonomous black political and social movement could bring about meaningful change in the black urban enclaves. Both Clark and Gershman saw racism as a pattern of biased social attitudes and intolerant behavior by white people, rather than as a systemic or structural part of modern capitalist political economy. In their only significant area of disagreement, Clark maintained that the ghetto was a product of racial oppression. But even here, Clark views racism as "a dangerous social disease" and not the logical outcome of consistent and coherent social structure, world view and economic order. Both view "class" as a function of income or economic mobility, rather than as a group relationship to the means of production, distribution and ownership.

Actually, the Gershman-Clark exchange produced little that was new. Black intellectuals had their own race versus class debate during the years 1973 through 1975. Black studies journals such as *Black World*, *The Black Scholar*, *Black Books Bulletin*, *The Journal of Black Studies* and others were filled with bitter polemics advancing either Marxist or black nationalist points of view. In the progressive wing of the modern Black Power movement the debate began somewhat earlier, in the late 1960s. Stokely Carmichael left the Black Panther Party in 1969, charging that Eldridge Cleaver, the party's minister of information, and other Panthers were too preoccupied with class alliances with the New Left. Cleaver retorted that Carmichael was caught up in a "skin game," and that white members of the Students for a Democratic Society who had read Marcuse, Fanon and Malcolm were appropriate allies in the struggle against the system.

In the late 1970s, the debate took a new turn to the right. Stanford professor Thomas Sowell used the pages of *Commentary* magazine to debunk affirmative action. In Sowell's view, affirmative action was based on the rather vague notion that blacks as a group had been historically oppressed and that massive Federal intervention into the free market would halt racial discrimination. He ridiculed the idea that all blacks were equally oppressed and criticized the legislation as harmful to both business interests and to unemployed blacks. William Julius Wilson went a step further in his controversial study *The Declining Significance of Race*. Wilson reviewed the political economy of black workers throughout U.S. history, and argued that the civil rights movement and the progressive actions of corporate management had nearly caused "the elimination of race in labor-management strife." Wilson's basic thesis was that racial discrimination is no longer a major bar to economic security or upward mobility by most blacks. Since the ma-

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jority of blacks were now in the middle class, the time had come to shift legislative priorities from racial questions to the more specific problems of the economic underclass.

Recent events within the political economy appear to validate many of Wilson's conclusions. The percentage of black families below the poverty level dropped from 55.1 percent in 1959 to 32.2 percent in 1969, but since then has remained at about the same level. Black family heads with four years or more college education, however, earn about 90 percent of what their white counterparts do. Black married couples below the age of 35 in the Northern and Western states who both work earn median incomes at the same level as white couples. This new black stratum of upper-middle to upper-income earners has articulated a clearly more conservative, class-conscious politics than the majority of blacks. The evidence for this is seen in the surprisingly high percentage (15 percent) of black votes for Ronald Reagan—the largest black total for any Republican Presidential candidate since the Nixon-Kennedy race in 1960. When the Rev. Ralph David Abernathy and other former associates of Martin Luther King Jr. embraced Reagan, and after Leon Sullivan (the black director of the Opportunities Industrial Centers) endorsed the nomination of Alexander Haig as Secretary of State, a new political current was born—Black Reaganism. These "new accommodationists" exhibit the same electoral political behavior as white neoconservatives.

Actually, there have been two different debates on the race-class question over the last decade. White paternalists like Gershman and integrationist-oriented blacks like Clark and Wilson are asking a series of questions that are premised on the assumption that racial integration is a positive good and a worthy social ideal. Black nationalists and activists, both in the universities and in the streets, are raising a radically different series of theoretical and programmatic issues. From the white side, the concerns expressed include: Should public policy concentrate on racial problems and continue to use race as a central or critical variable? Should blacks concentrate their energies on matters of mutual racial interest, or should they begin to address the larger economic problems that transcend race entirely? From the black activist side, the questions include: What is white racism? Is it simply a "social disease"—intolerance or bigotry—or are the latter merely surface manifestations of profounder structural forces? What is the relationship between racism as a system and the general economic order? What is the possibility of a political union or common program among black, Hispanic and progressive white groups, given the omnipresence of white racism and the disastrous history of multiracial alliances from Populism to Black Power? Leaving aside the concerns of white social scientists for the moment, let us concentrate on the black side of the race-class dilemma.

There is a major difference between racial prejudice against blacks in the United States and other forms of intolerance or persecution. Intolerance has existed as long as human beings have lived together in social units. The victims of intolerance are forced to give up their own group's belief systems, cultural and social institutions, customs and the like. The outsider must, for the good of the majority, renounce his differences and embrace those values defined as "normal" by those who control the social, cultural and economic hierarchies. Racial prejudice is radically different. Racism is a relatively recent historical phenomenon, developing gradually in the West as capitalism and nationalism emerged. Its purpose is to withdraw the dominant group's sympathy from an "inferior race" in order to facilitate its exploitation. Thus, some of the very goals of black liberation, which include the ability to control blacks' labor, the establishment of stable, independent communities and the opportunity to participate and to compete within the socio-economic institutions of the dominant society according to our own self-interests, threaten white racist beliefs and social structures crucial to the continuation of white racial domination.

Black sociologist Oliver Cromwell Cox expressed the problem of racial prejudice succinctly by comparing blacks and Jews as victims in a new way. "The dominant group is intolerant of those whom it can define as antisocial, while it holds race prejudice against those whom it can define as subsocial. In other words, the dominant group or ruling class does not like the Jew at all, but it likes the Negro in his place." The function of white racist attacks against black children who are bused across town to attend a formerly all-white suburban school is therefore fundamentally different from the bombing of a synagogue in Paris by neo-Nazis. Jews are objects of hatred for being different, e.g., non-Christian; blacks are hated for attempting to reverse the natural social order of things. Cox explains, "A Jewish pogrom is not exactly similar to a Negro lynching. In a pogrom the fundamental motive is the extermination of the Jews; in a lynching, however, the motive is that of giving the Negro a lesson in good behavior."

A central theme in Frantz Fanon's *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs* is the examination of the similarities and differences between white anti-Semitism and white racism against people of African descent. "No anti-Semite would ever conceive of the idea of castrating the Jew," Fanon observed. "He is killed or sterilized. But the Negro is castrated. The penis, the symbol of manhood, is annihilated, which is to say that it is denied." The anti-Semite attacks the religious and cultural symbols that set Jews apart from other people within Western culture. This is a denial of history, as it were. But blacks *are assumed to have no history*, and are assaulted on radically different philosophical grounds. "All the same, the Jew can be unknown in his Jewishness." Fanon continued:

> One hopes, one waits. His actions, his behavior are the final determinant. He is a white man, and, apart from some rather debatable characteristics, he can sometimes go unnoticed. Granted, the Jews are harassed—what am I thinking of? They are hunted down, exterminated, cremated. But these are little family quarrels. The Jew is disliked from the moment he is tracked down. But in my case everything takes on a *new* guise. I am given no chance. I am overdetermined

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from without. I am the slave not of the "idea" that others have of me but of my own appearance. I am *fixed*.

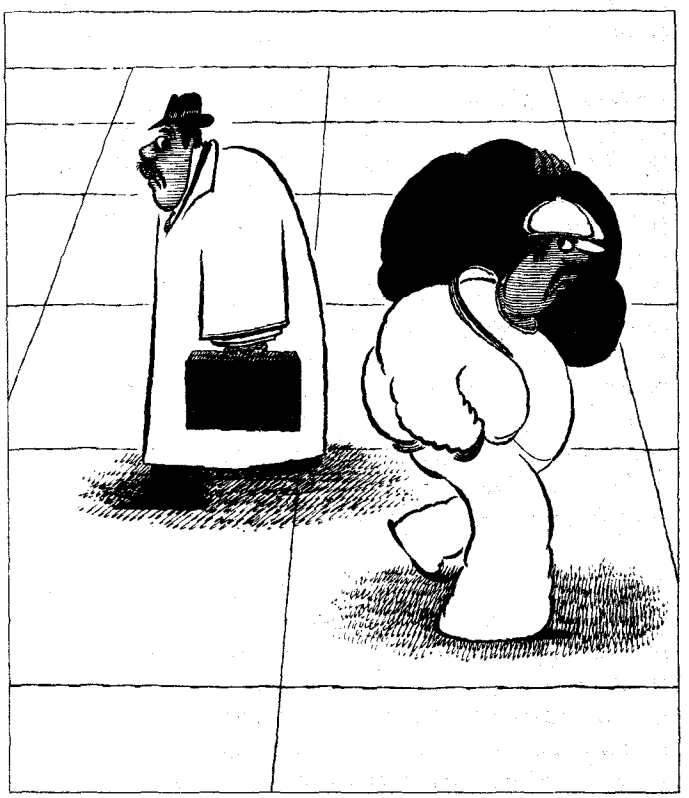
Thus, racism should be understood as an institutional process rather than a random pattern of intolerant collective behavior. Broadly defined, it is a process of persecution and violence in the service of white power; its purpose is the systemic exploitation of black life and labor. The key word here is *systemic*.

A social order can be characterized as distinctively racist if it exhibits the following characteristics: First, a political economy in which the surplus value produced by black workers is expropriated to a much greater degree than is that produced by white labor. In a precapitalist or primitive capitalist society, this exploitation usually takes the form of a system of compulsory black labor. W. Kloosterboer's *Involuntary Labour Since the Abolition of Slavery* defines compulsory labor "as that from which withdrawal is generally considered a criminal offense, so that it engenders penal sanction, and/or for which [the laborer] has been accepted without his willing consent." Using this criterion, both chattel slavery (pre-1865) and sharecropping (post-1865) can be classified as kinds of involuntary labor exploitation in the black South. In advanced capitalist societies, black workers assume the role of a surplus labor pool which must be prepared to shift from one low-paying sector of the economy to another upon demand. Blacks are "the last hired, the first fired" under these unstable conditions. (Poor whites, too, are in the surplus labor pool, but they do not suffer the stigma of race, at least.) Moreover, since capitalism by its very nature cannot provide a full-employment economy, it creates a permanent underclass of blacks, who are for all practical purposes outside the workplace. The managerial heights of the racist political economy are occupied almost totally by whites. Blacks as individuals may be appointed to managerial positions within the corporate hierarchy, but blacks as a group have absolutely no critical power other than as consumers.

A second characteristic of any racist order is the historic and systemic pattern of physical isolation, exclusion and (in many cases) extermination of the oppressed race-class. This includes both de facto and de jure segregation, customary and legal forms of Jim Crow. To be sure, different cultural and social forms of racial isolation and exclusion have existed in the Americas. Brazilians have an obvious racial bias against people of African descent, but it has been muted and redirected in ways that a North American white could scarcely comprehend. The common saying in nineteenth-century Brazil, "Money lightens the skin," shows that blacks were almost always poor, but that wealth induced virtual colorblindness. This was far from the case in countries settled by the English and Dutch, who practiced a radical form of collective exclusion and of social isolation from their African laborers. The largest settler regimes which these two European nations founded, the United States of America and the Republic of South Africa, are still objectively the most racist countries to this day.

The third factor is what the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci called the "ideological hegemony" of white racism. The universities, public schools, media, theater and other creative arts, religion, civic associations and political parties—all provide the public rationale to justify, explain, legitimize or tolerate racism. Ideological hegemony imposes a collective consensus within the social order. Thus, in the United States the media play down potentially disruptive information on the race question; inferior schooling for black children denies them necessary information and skills; cultural and social history is rewritten so that racial conflict and class struggle are glossed over and the melting pot ideal stressed; religious dogmas such as those espoused by fundamentalist Christians divert political protest and reaffirm the conservative values on which the white middle class's traditional illusions of superiority are grounded.

Fourth is the relationship between black people and the coercive arms of the state—the police, armed forces, prisons, the criminal justice system and white vigilante hate-groups such as the Ku Klux Klan. In all racist states blacks make up a disproportionately large percentage of the prison population compared with their numbers in the society as a whole. In the United States, studies have shown that black, Hispanic and poor defendants on the whole receive harsher sentences and more meager legal services than middle-class whites who commit identical crimes. The percentage of black policemen on metropolitan forces is almost always lower than the black urban population in the area. The percentage of blacks in managerial positions in any agency of coercion is always lower than the percentage of blacks who are employed in menial tasks. A culture of violence is fostered within the oppressed communities where the coercive arms of the state serve as an "occupying army" and regulate and suppress the development of black community. As a result, the ability of blacks as a group to develop stable



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family units and neighborhoods, to construct social, cultural and alternative economic institutions, to strive for upward socioeconomic mobility within the predominantly white order of things is inhibited.

The fifth category is philosophical—the redefinition of "blackness" in the light of the reality of "whiteness." As G.W.F. Hegel's *Lordship and Bondage* points out, human identity, that is, critical self-consciousness, rises out of a process of reciprocity and recognition. Human beings exist only as they are recognized by others. But the dialectics of recognition do not necessarily occur on the basis of equality. Furthermore, an important source of identity for human beings is the labor they perform.

In a racist society black identity arises out of a master-slave relationship with dominant white groups. As a result, the oppressed are unable to acquire meaning or purpose from the compulsory labor that is invariably their lot; in a contemporary capitalist economy, they are denied the opportunity to work at meaningful jobs. Work as a creative, productive endeavor ceases to exist for blacks as a group, and whites draw the erroneous conclusion that blacks do not like to work simply because they are black. Furthermore, the ideological and coercive powers of the state repress the struggles of blacks to attain full equality, and in so doing, prevent the formation of a positive and distinctive black identity. The African socialist theorist Amilcar Cabral suggested that when colonialism or compulsory labor began, African history was frozen or "stopped." For the racist order to function, the alternate set of human values, customs and institutions that the oppressed had in the preracist state must be suppressed. Whites as a group have historically approached blacks not in the light of their "blackness"—perhaps a better term would be "Africanness"—but in the light of what whites believed that blacks must become from the vantage point of their own "whiteness." Racist societies must invent "the Negro." Black revolutions thus often represented an attempt "to return to the source"; they rejected the inequality of the white world and sought a renaissance of the precolonial, preracist black culture and society.

The transformation of African peoples into the status of "Negroes" took place even before black chattel slavery was established as the dominant means of production in the Southern United States. For example, many colonial historians have observed that white settlers always referred to the Native Americans, or Indians, as members of certain nations or tribes, or at worst, as "savages" or "heathens." Other than the term "redskin" (which is not pejorative), Indians were not described on the basis of skin color. Among white colonists the principal distinctions were religious or ethnic. Blacks alone were set apart because of their skin color. And as early as 1660 in the Virginia colony, blackness itself was identical with the status of a chattel slave. Negroes ceased to be Africans; blackness became an ascribed status rising out of whites' demands for black labor, rather than a distinctive culture or even a condition of humanity.

The sixth characteristic of a racist order involves a draconian suppression of an imagined black sexual "threat." A major force behind all antiblack restrictions and regulations has always been the irrational yet very real anxiety white males have expressed concerning black sexuality. In *The White Man's Burden*, historian Winthrop Jordan argues that the threat of black slave revolts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was usually perceived in sexual terms. "The notion existed that black men were particularly virile, promiscuous and lusted after white women. It is apparent that white men projected their own desires onto Negroes: their own passion for black women was not fully acceptable to society or the self and hence not readily admissible." Black women, however, were held to be naturally lascivious and passionate, and thus were fair game for sexual predation. The sexual pathology of whites was enshrined as public policy in laws permitting castration of blacks. In colony after colony, from Quaker Pennsylvania to the Carolinas, castration became a form of legal punishment for a whole set of black male offenses. At the root of this cruel punishment, Jordan contends, was the white man's "racking fear and jealousy" of what black men could do if their relative positions and powers were reversed. Their mastery in the world of economics and politics meant little if the very black man they belittled and abused "performed his nocturnal offices better than the white man. Perhaps, indeed, the white man's woman really wanted the Negro more than she wanted him."

Here again, Fanon's commentary is critical. "The civilized white man retains an irrational longing for unusual eras of sexual license, of orgiastic scenes, of unpunished rapes, of unrepressed incest. Projecting his own desires onto the Negro," Fanon noted, "the white man behaves 'as if' the Negro really had them." For the racist, the black male represents or symbolizes the fundamental biological fear:

> On the genital level, when a white man hates black men, is he not yielding to a feeling of impotence or of sexual inferiority? Since his ideal is an infinite virility, is there not a phenomenon of diminution in relation to the Negro, who is viewed as a penis symbol? Is the Negro's superiority real? Everyone *knows* that it is not. But that is not what matters. The prelogical thought of the phobic has decided that such is the case.

Racism, then, is not merely intolerance toward blacks, or the "superstructural justification" of the exploitation of black labor, or the collective projection of white psychosexual neuroses. It is all of these elements and more; its roots in Western capitalist society and culture are deep and pervasive. To change the basic dynamics of a system that is almost four centuries old requires more than the simple transfer of state authority from a group of barbarous whites to another group of well-meaning whites—whether socialists, New Left, liberals or others.

This is because nothing in socialist or liberal political theory or practice to date indicates that white radicals have abandoned their simplistic economic determinism or white liberals their unrealistic belief in moral suasion. Thus, blacks, and blacks alone, must take the initial and decisive

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steps toward developing an adequate social theory to destroy white racism. (This observation is not made out of black chauvinism, or disregard for the many sincere and dedicated white activists who gave their lives for the cause of black freedom—from John Brown and William Lloyd Garrison to Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner.) No long-range coalitions between white progressive organizations and black militant groups, such as the newly formed National Black Independent Political Party, can successfully mount a challenge to the New Right—a white social protest movement that is both intolerant and racist in character and intent—until this hard and painful theoretical work is done.

The prerequisite for waging an unconditional struggle against white racism is the successful rebuilding of an autonomous, anticapitalist black movement. This will require, at the very least, the formation of a black political party and a black united front, a broad-based coalition of progressive black organizations that are opposed to racism and Reaganism. Both political entities will inevitably engage in a political dialogue with the broader liberal and left constituencies among Hispanics, feminists, antinuclear power activists, trade unions and others. All potentially nonracist and anticapitalist groups must unite in creating a common program for social and economic equality across the color line.

In *An American Dilemma*, Gunnar Myrdal observed that even during the Great Depression most blacks found it difficult to accept the Old Left's argument that socialism would quickly end the race problem. "When discussing Communism in the Negro community," he wrote, "the most common black response was the comment, 'Even after a revolution the country will be full of crackers.'" Only when American progressives, black and white, recognize the kernel of truth within this remark, and begin to construct a more realistic theoretical and programmatic response to white racism, can the promise of a truly nonracist society begin to be realized and the burden of race *and* class finally lifted. □

COMMENTS

Roger Wilkins

Considering the maudlin and confused mutterings that Ronald Reagan's brutalities have set off in liberal and black ranks, Manning Marable's essay comes as a breath of very fresh air, for it is clearly based on a faith that blacks possess a creative force that will continue to build during this ugly political time in America. Although the massive display of white power now occurring in Washington could tempt one to conclude that Dr. Marable's exhortation to build an "autonomous, anticapitalist black movement" is like asking us to pitch a stone at the ocean, I ultimately conclude that there is something very appealing about his argument.

I grew up as a confirmed integrationist, and it seemed the right approach to our problems at the time. Integration is little more than an end to unjust denials to blacks of many things that are our due in this society. Having achieved a good bit of it, however, we can now see that far from being the ultimate goal, it is of limited value—a way station on the road to true justice. And, the fact that some blacks are integrated in workplaces, in restaurants and even in housing developments doesn't mean that there is not still a great deal of organizational and theoretical work for us to do by and for ourselves.

I certainly agree that racism is systemic and not idiosyncratic. The fact that Bull Connor wasn't the basic problem was one of the lessons of the 1960s. Then the 1970s taught us that political and income gains for a good number of blacks could not be translated into the kind of power that can do something significant about the plight of people who bear the crippling burdens of being both members of the underclass and black. The 1970s also brought us a diminution of the power of the *idea* of blackness. We saw a submergence of the idealism and exuberance associated with the Black Power movement into generalized efforts by educated blacks to succeed in mainstream white America.

The 1980s promise to teach us a bracing lesson in just how deep, brutal and dishonest systemic racism in America continues to be. I wouldn't give up a bit of my integration, but I know that it won't put nourishment on the tables of those families pushed out of the food stamp program or restore legal services to the poor when Reagan takes the program away. I also know that the linked problems of poverty and blackness are no longer being attacked as effectively as they need to be by the intellectual and programmatic tools which my generation helped to forge. And, I know finally that there is not much compassion or humanity in the American electorate these days and less in the White House and at the Office of Management and Budget.

There are thus two tasks that blacks need to undertake simultaneously. The first is the development of powerful new self-help instruments in the black community, including the intellectual and organizational efforts that Marable outlines. The second is a continuation and a strengthening of the attempts to wrench from the political and economic systems in this country everything we can to alleviate the plight of and enlarge the opportunities for the black poor.

These are tasks that we black people must begin to undertake with a recognition that during the 1960s we did not complete the task of forging a strong, protective black identity for ourselves—we only began. We need also to remember that integration, invaluable as it is, does not address the issue of power and leaves the question of identity somewhere between assimilation and shame. These are important political problems because there is precious little physical comfort for the poorest blacks in America and there is only limited psychic comfort for the relatively affluent. Until the distances between us are diminished by intellectual and organizational work that addresses the physical and psychic needs in the black community, none of us will truly be free. □

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Nathan Huggins

An old saying among blacks goes: "You can't secede from the race." Obviously, light-skinned black people could "pass" and lose themselves in the

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white world, but neither circumstances nor class pretensions could change a black person's fundamental interests. Now there are those who argue that class has superseded race.

There has never been a time when blacks have not been conscious of class distinctions among themselves, and much of the social critique and social programs from the Civil War to the present have reflected the interests of the black bourgeoisie rather than those of the peasants or the workers.

Until the civil rights revolution in the 1960s, however, racial restrictions forced all blacks, regardless of class, into the same boat. Occupational and residential restrictions obliged black "middle-class" leaders struggling for their own interests to serve the poor as well. Reform organizations, nevertheless, pressed for educational and housing reforms that benefited the middle class. In the 1940s and 1950s, black workers fortunate enough to belong to unions would find their class interests better served by labor than by reform organizations.

The changes we have witnessed in the 1960s and the 1970s have benefited the black middle class more than workers or the poor. Moving into suburbs and into executive suites, leaving the poor in ghettos, underemployed and powerless, the middle class seems guided by class rather than race interests. The black professional, no less than the white, would choose private schools over the deteriorating inner-city public schools. They, too, are anxious lest their children fail to imbibe the success ethic of their class. Even good, integrated schools such as the Berkeley, California, system find black and white professionals vying to get their children into private schools, indicating that both races are willing to leave the black poor to sink into an underclass.

We should not be deceived, however, by such surface signs. As I say, blacks have always been class conscious, happy to substitute class for race if they could. The question is, can class interests override race interests in America? I think not. It is not, after all, a question for blacks alone to decide. One must assume that whites and blacks can find common class interests that can replace race consciousness. Nothing in our past would argue for the likelihood of this happening, and no recent development persuades me that this fundamental situation has changed.

This is not to deny that there are shared class interests among blacks and whites. Coalitions have worked and will work again. For class to supplant race as the primary, affective identity, however, one must assume that white as well as black can be colorblind. We have to imagine white workers accepting black leadership and black neighbors.

That example appears a bit unfair, because those who argue class over race focus mainly on the white-collar middle class. Here, too, the question has to be asked: However "like them" a black person will be, can he be accepted as loyal on class issues that seem counter to the interests of his race? The point is that affective identity in America has been ethnic and racial for too long for the recent, modest good fortune of a few blacks to change things.

Race versus class, like integration versus separation, is a perennial conundrum among racial theorists. They argue about it heatedly each time it surfaces as though there were real choices involved and distinct programs to be devised. Just as blacks (and whites, for that matter) cannot choose to integrate, or choose to separate, they cannot choose race or class; we are stuck with both. It is a difficult thing for Americans to conceive, so convinced are we that all problems have solutions, and so ill-suited are we to paradox. Race in America, however, *is* paradox. We will have the chance once again to observe that fact when the next great wave of race consciousness (and nationalism) is upon us. You can count on it. □

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Herbert G. Gutman

Manning Marable rightly urges that blacks organize politically to protect themselves from regressive Reaganomics. That should happen across class lines because most middle-class blacks also will suffer with their poorer sisters and brothers from Ronald Reagan's upward redistribution of wealth and income and from the harsh and unequal spread of Coolidgeism and Thatcherism over this land.

But Marable's "explanation" for such a politics is incomplete, erroneous and politically irresponsible. Especially in 1981. "Beating on Whitey" (and black "integrationists" like Kenneth Clark) may have been "good" politics in the 1960s, though I doubt it. But doing that in the 1980s in the name of "creating a common program for social and economic equality across color lines" is political madness and plain mumbo jumbo. Poor black Americans —by themselves—cannot transform their appalling condition. That remains central to their historic American experience. They must participate fully in any such transformation, but this is not a Third World country. It is—for better and worse—the U. S. of A.

Marable's "structural" explanations for the tenacity of North American racism are tattered and worn remnants of 1960s rhetoric. They also are filled with errors. He misreads both Antonio Gramsci and Amilcar Cabral. To argue, moreover, that their North American experiences did no more than transform "Africans" into "Negroes" dismisses a generation of interracial scholarship that has demonstrated exactly the opposite. That scholarship, incidentally, descends directly from W.E.B. Du Bois. What has Marable been reading?

Marable's "structural explanations" —including the castration chestnut— lead directly to political impotence or withdrawal. His conclusion that interracial politics cannot begin until "blacks and blacks alone . . . take the initial and decisive steps toward developing an adequate social theory to destroy racism" is a call for political inaction at a moment of political reaction. When will that "theory" be ready for us? And what do the black and white victims of Reaganomics—especially the poor—do while waiting for such "hard and painful theoretical work"?

Marable seems to have old scores to settle with white liberals and white leftists as well as "integrationists" of all colors. He should settle them, but not by encouraging parlor politics. His "structural" diagnosis leads there and nowhere else, and that is why it is so wantonly irresponsible. When Reagan-

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omics fails (as it surely will), its sponsors will scurry to find tested American ways to bolster their power. Black Americans once again may be scapegoated, this time in the name of "law and order." That is a very dangerous politics in a declining but increasingly militarized economy. And it is the racial and class fallout that will follow from the collapse of Reaganomics that we should be discussing, not tired sectarian political posturing, black or white. □

Aryeh Neier

Manning Marable presents a perceptive and an important analysis of the nature of racial prejudice against blacks and its part in creating the black underclass. It should be read together with George M. Frederickson's brilliant new book *White Supremacy* (Oxford, 1981), comparing the history of race relations in South Africa and the United States.

The connection between Marable's analysis and his call for "rebuilding of an autonomous, anticapitalist black movement" (was there one previously?) and his conclusion that a black political party is required, escapes me, however. As a political strategy in the United States, black exclusivity doesn't make sense. The reasons are obvious. Blacks make up less than 12 percent of the population. They make up an even smaller percentage of the population eligible to vote. They do not control significant economic resources. And, their votes are largely concentrated in geographic areas of declining economic and political significance.

Marable may be right in contending that the "integrationism" he seems to scorn is primarily advocated by blacks and whites who have not adequately analyzed the nature of racism. Even so, given the relative numerical strengths of the races in America, integration remains the least bad political strategy for bringing about racial equality. □

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Herbert Hill

Manning Marable's provocative essay reminds us that the polemicists of the right who now argue that class, not race, is the decisive factor in current racial conflict, are responsible for egregious distortions of history. First, the "facts" they frequently present are either false or outdated or both. For example, Nathan Glazer in his influential book, *Affirmative Discrimination*, argues that a new consensus against racial discrimination was reached in the 1960s, and that blacks have made great gains in achieving job parity with whites. Therefore affirmative-action programs are not only wrong but also unnecessary.

A careful reading reveals that Glazer's arguments are not based on primary data but on a much-criticized article by his fellow neoconservative Daniel P. Moynihan in *The Public Interest*. Moynihan had previously argued that black families with a head of the household aged under 35, in the North and West, had achieved 91 percent of the income earned by similar white families in 1971. But a little research reveals that only 10 percent of black families were in fact in that category, and that a majority of these black families had two or more wage earners in contrast with one wage earner among the white families. Furthermore, long before Glazer's book was published, even those data were obsolete because the economic condition of black families had deteriorated and the racial income differential had increased.

Crucial to the position of those who deny the significance of race in contemporary American society is that they find it necessary not only to rewrite history but indeed to deny its very existence. The refusal to recognize the centrality of race in American history is not simply the omission of much of the history of the nation, i.e., slavery, the Fourteenth Amendment, Reconstruction and post-Reconstruction and much more but it is also a denial of the very existence and nature of contemporary racism. Current racist practices are not usually the result of individual random acts of malevolence but rather a consequence of systemic structures that are rooted in the economic and social order.

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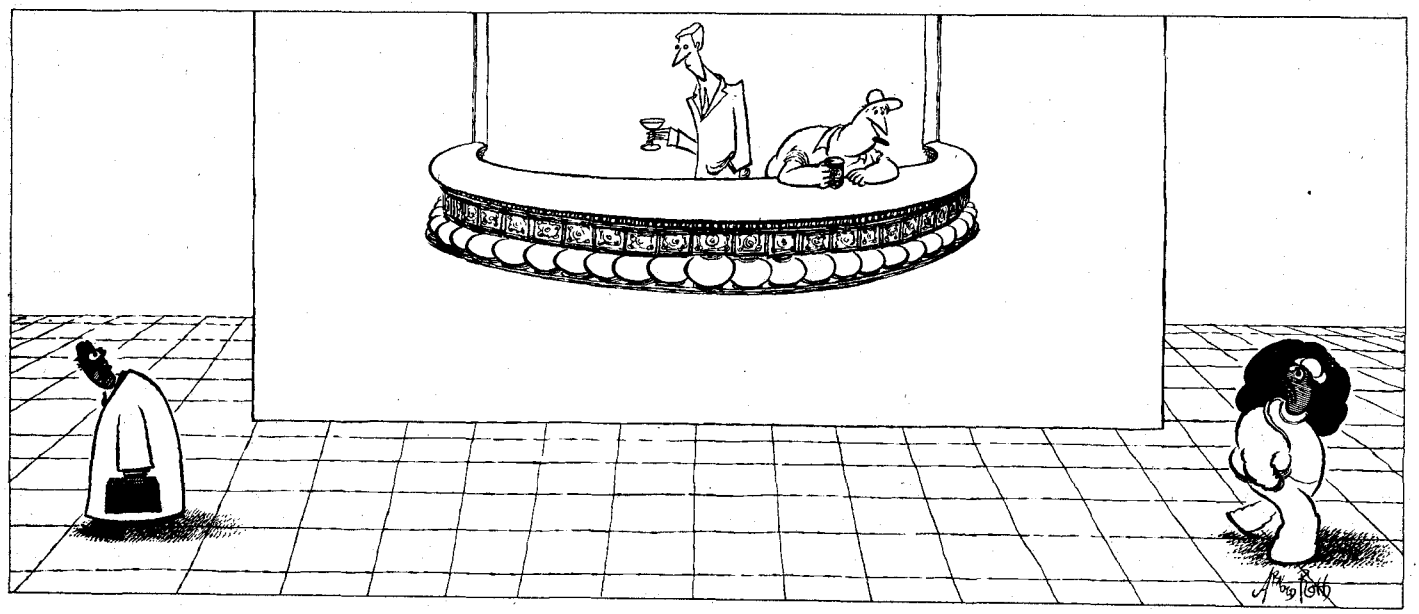

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A major consequence of these systemic patterns is that they injure blacks as a racial group and benefit whites as a racial group. In a variety of different contexts, whites derive substantial benefits, both monetary and psychological, from the subordinate position of blacks. Because of space limitations I shall refer only to current conflicts in industry which reach the courts under Title VII, the employment section of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In many industries, employers and labor unions have negotiated collective-bargaining agreements that limit black workers to segregated occupational classifications with separate seniority lines of promotion. (Federal courts have found such seniority systems to be unlawful in the railroad, steel, tobacco, paper manufacturing and other industries.) Through the rationalization of labor costs, the greater rate of exploitation of the black worker subsidizes the higher wages of the white worker. Employers also gain from such practices through the benefits of a labor policy that results in lower average costs.

As a result, white workers have expectations of earnings and promotions that are based in varying degrees on the denial of equal opportunity to blacks. The elimination of unequal employment opportunities based on race necessarily affects the expectations of whites, since it compels competition with black workers where none previously existed.

White expectations have become the norm; thus, when racial practices that have historically disadvantaged blacks are removed to eliminate the effects of past discrimination, whites believe that preferential treatment is given to blacks. It is, in fact, the removal of the preferential treatment traditionally enjoyed by white workers at the expense of black wage earners that is now at issue. These self-generated factors—the result of the historic dual labor system based on race—account for the determined resistance by labor unions and employers to changes in the status of the black labor force.

The most frequently repeated argument of those who deny the primacy of racism in contemporary American society turns on the notion of individual rights and sounds very moral and high-minded, indeed. But it ignores basic social reality. For example, blacks have not been denied equal treatment as individuals but as a racial group—no matter what their personal merit and qualifications. Correspondingly, whites as a racial group have benefited from this systematic discrimination. The notion that these whites are innocent and blameless is of course a myth: they are the beneficiaries of the patterns and practices of racist systems.

Race remains the central critical variable in the lives of most black Americans. That the configuration or the forms of racist structures have been somewhat altered does not change the fundamental fact of their existence. *The Nation* is to be complimented for making available an essay that makes an important contribution to the development of effective strategies in the struggle against the ideologues of the racial status quo. □

Hulbert H. James

As a colleague of Manning Marable, I wish to extend my thanks to him for clarifying the question of race versus class. There seems to be no middle ground on this issue. If you take the race side, white racism is the enemy; and if you support the class side, Western capitalism is the enemy.

Professor Marable does not address the critical development of intraracial class divisions which make this debate different in the 1980s, however. Also, interracial alliances have been split over issues like affirmative action. The following chart illustrates the relative emphasis various political shadings place on the race-class issue:

	Whites	*Blacks*
Progressives	Strong Class	Strong Class
	Weak Race	Strong Race
Liberals	Weak Class	Weak Class
	Strong Race	Strong Race
Neoconservatives	Strong Class	Strong Class
	Weak Race	Weak Race

This division is reflected in debates on several major public policy questions. The desegregation of black colleges is supported by liberal whites and opposed by most black groups. On the international level, the coming together of more than 100 black leaders to protest the ouster of Andrew Young as Ambassador to the United Nations signaled a new approach to the Middle East question by the black community. The Reagan election has brought this debate to the front pages with the rise of black neoconservatives under the leadership of people like Thomas Sowell.

Black neoconservatives want to dismantle affirmative action programs, which puts them in the same boat with white neoconservatives. Black neoconservatives champion supply-side economics while progressive blacks see fundamental structural problems in the U.S. economic system as the cause of the disproportionate unemployment burden borne by people of color. Liberal blacks are caught in the middle, and are not sure where they stand on programs like Urban Enterprise Jobs Zones.

Did supply-side economics produce the black middle class of the 1970s? It can be argued that Government programs were responsible for the "rise of the black middle class." Billions of dollars for human services programs at the Federal, state and local levels raised thousands of workers to middle-income salary levels. These workers are now threatened by the massive budget cuts being proposed by the Reagan Administration. While it is true that the investment of billions of dollars did not help the permanent underclass, there is sufficient evidence that, dollar for dollar, investment in the public sector creates more jobs than tax reduction.

The principal difficulty in forming a progressive black-white coalition is the strong feelings on race among progressive blacks. Race, not class, is still the strongest consideration in organizing blacks. Whether it was the League for Revolutionary Workers in the 1960s or the National Black Independent Political Party of the 1980s, the element of self-determination transcends the class question. The leadership of the league had a class perspective, but their organizing was fueled by the black awareness movement of the late 1960s. Today, many progressive white groups fail to address racial issues, especially those citizen action groups that are organizing along neighborhood lines, because of fear that the fragile organizations they have built will fall apart. On a number of issues that affect entire classes, such as tax reform, energy, plant closings, etc., progressive whites have taken the lead.

To sum up: defining race as the enemy means white racism is the enemy and defining class as the enemy means the economic system is the enemy. Progressive Third World peoples believe that elements of race and elements of class are the twin enemies. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

'... The Jumping Into It'

SUSAN McHENRY

CIVIL WARS. *By June Jordan. Beacon Press. 188 pp. $12.95.*

Up to now, June Jordan has been best known as a poet. Her 1977 volume, *Things That I Do in the Dark: Selected Poems*, has recently been reissued, and *Passion: New Poems 1977-1980* has been published this year as well, both from Beacon Press. However, she has also been teacher, activist, political journalist, film scenarist, playwright, novelist, author of children's books and a colleague of R. Buckminster Fuller in urban design. And she is the daughter of proud West Indian immigrant parents (with whom she was often in intense conflict); gifted student who won scholarships to prep school and to Barnard College; wife to a man who happened to be white (at a time, she notes, when "interracial marriage was a felony in forty-three states"); mother to a son, and, eventually, female head of household and lover of women as well as of men.

Civil Wars discloses all of the above, as well as Jordan's talents as a prose writer. A collection of her works from 1964 through 1980, *Civil Wars* is a seamless and eloquent personal retrospective, an intellectual and political autobiography. Like Robin Morgan's *Going Too Far: The Personal Chronicle of a Feminist*, its backdrop is two decades of social change, with notable failures and triumphs.

From the Harlem riots of 1964 to the Miami riots of 1980, Jordan surveys a social and political landscape that is shattered by racial conflict and violence. But *Civil Wars* is not solely about the complexities of America's racial politics. Its real subject, relevant within or outside the American grain, is power: its abuse by those who have it, and the rebellion against that abuse by those who don't.

Jordan's characteristic stance is combative. She is exhilarated by a good fight, by taking on her antagonists against the odds. This attitude was encouraged by two men in her youth: her father ("the first regular bully in my life"), who fell into the habit of violently acting out his frustrations on his family, and an adored uncle, a former World War II Army officer and later a probation officer, who lived on the third floor of the Jordans' Brooklyn brownstone. He frequently came to young June's defense when her father was after her, and eventually taught her how to defend herself—physically and psychologically—from any bully. His advice: "Probably you can't win. . . . But if you go in there, saying to yourself, 'I may not win this one, but it's going to cost you; if you hit me you better hope to take me out. Because I'll be going for your life.'—If you go in there like that they'll leave you alone. And remember: it's a bully. It's not about fair. From the start, it's not about fair." Subsequent experience with a range of bullies confirmed this and more. "The outcome matters less than the jumping into it," she writes. "Once you're on, there's adrenalin pumping of self-respect that compensates for terror . . . fighting is a whole lot less disagreeable than turning tail or knuckling under."

But if Jordan learned to relish the showdown, she also learned to recognize the risks and dangers of polarization. Her eyewitness account of the 1964 Harlem riots in a letter to her husband (at the time, he was in graduate school at the University of Chicago) reads like a crisp report from a war-weary correspondent. Shortly after those riots, in the spirit and interest of escaping "the sundering paralysis of conflict," Jordan joined Buckminster Fuller in a collaboration on an architectural redesign of Harlem: "a pacific life-expanding design for human community" that would not dislocate the people already living there. The new dwellings were to be constructed above Harlem's tenements, leveling the old only after the new were completed. Green spaces were to replace the old buildings so neighborly street life could flourish.

Jordan's belief in words as holy and powerful enough to transform experience was planted in her mind as early as age 2, she says, when her mother carried her every Sunday to Harlem's Universal Truth Center; here she heard the majestic phrase, "In the beginning was the Word. . . ." During her embattled girlhood, she conceived of words as a set of unique weapons she could use. In this connection, she was unconsciously the literary daughter of Richard Wright, who wrote in *Black Boy* how his attraction to language and writing was less a means of communication than a way to flatten his oppressors.

Unlike Wright, however, Jordan succeeded in effectively uniting her impulse to fight with her need and desire to love. "I chose to believe my enemies can either be vanquished or else converted into allies, into Brothers," she writes. In her essay "Notes Toward a Black Balancing of Love and Hatred," she acknowledges the debt of Afro-American literature to Wright's impassioned protest fiction, but also reclaims Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, the prototypical novel of black love and affirmation. The novel had been so neglected and devalued that even Jordan did not read it until 1974 when her friend, the novelist and Hurston scholar Alice Walker, placed a copy in her hands.

Other essays in *Civil Wars* reveal Jordan as an advocate for children, "the only blameless people alive." She is outspoken against their abuse, whether in the context of family violence, or the neglect of and assault on the psyches and intellects of black children by inner-city public schools. Jordan also enters into the politics of feeding hungry people, whether in the African Sahel or the Mississippi Delta. She attacks the updating of the imperialist mythology of Joseph Conrad in Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*. She inveighs against the "American-style Third Reich" theories of William Shockley being afforded a public forum. She writes of white-on-white violence in the South, conflicts between Hasidic Jews and blacks in Brooklyn, and proposes that the obscenity of apartheid in South Africa and a black woman's inability to walk New York City streets unmolested after dark are links in the same chain of injustice.

Jordan's considerable skills as a polemicist are particularly well displayed in the controversy over black English, to wit: "The subject of Black English cannot be intelligently separated from the subject of language as

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translation and translation as a political process distinguishing between the powerless and powerful in no uncertain terms." She writes as "one among a growing number of Black poets and writers dedicated to the preservation of Black language within our lives, and dedicated to the health of our children as they prepare themselves for life within this standard, white America which has despised our speech and our prayers and our love." She juxtaposes black English as "the carrier of black survivor consciousness" against white English as "a calculated political display of power to control and eliminate the powerless." She also makes a distinction between unacceptable substandard language and effective nonstandard speech; between language that communicates and language that doesn't. "Is *Shakespeare* standard English?" she inquires provocatively.

Civil Wars deals also with the misinterpretation of black concerns by white-controlled media. Her current introduction to her harsh review of Michele Wallace's *Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman*, reprinted from *The New York Times Book Review*, suggests that a source of her pique was the media attention afforded Wallace's flawed but promising first book coupled with the lack of recognition for a range of more mature work by other black women writers. Jordan herself feels much beleaguered by the white critical and editorial establishment. For example, she wrote up her urban design collaboration with Buckminster Fuller for *Esquire*, but when published, it was wholly attributed to Fuller and its title, "Skyrise for Harlem," had been changed to "Instant Slum Clearance." Jordan's article in *Seven Days* about ethnic conflict in Brooklyn, "In the Valley of the Shadow of Death," was changed to "Blacks Against Hasidic Jews." And her critique of the black movement, the women's movement and the Third World movement (Jordan prefers "First World" as a more accurate designation), "Declaration of an Independence I Would Just as Soon Not Have," became in *Ms.* "Second Thoughts of a Black Feminist."

But more interesting and ultimately more important than these complaints is the essay "On Listening: A Good Way to Hear," which originally appeared in *The Nation* as "Spokesman for the Blacks" (she hated that title, too). Taking off from William Styron's *Confessions of Nat Turner* ("Styron's stunt," she calls it), Jordan describes the insidious pattern of black people's limited access to hearing and speaking in their own voices. This is no simple-minded "only-black-folk-can-understand-the-black-experience" argument: she does praise the white novelist Warren Miller (author of *The Cool World*, on which the film by the same name was based) as a "writer gifted with an extraordinarily accurate and willing ear," as well as Jonathan Kozol's *Death at an Early Age* for being "honest" and "new." What she deplores is the failure of "white" media to solicit the opinions of black critics on work like Styron's, and the proliferation of "professional white intermediaries" who interpret black experience. They are, she says, multiplying faster than the opportunities for black self-expression and interpretation. Unfortunately, this remains true even though there are now a few more of us token black critics and writers who appear in "mainstream" publications.

The title essay, which concludes the book, is the clearest example of the way in which the personal and political mesh in Jordan's vision. At its heart is an account of a rupture and, finally, a resolution in Jordan's nearly twenty-year friendship with the white sociologist and writer Frances Fox Piven. This friendship originally was based on their common problems as single women raising children and their common commitment as activists for the rights of blacks and the poor. But the friendship also rested on a polite silence in areas where they did not fully trust each other: the Jewish Piven suspects there is anti-Semitism behind Jordan's journalistic accounts of conflicts between blacks and Jews; and Jordan, who is bisexual, is sensitive to Piven's flippant disregard for gay rights.

The "good news" of the Miami riots—which happened shortly after Jordan's breach with Piven—is welcomed by Jordan as a "departure from the civilities that grease oppression." Part of the burden that the powerful impose on the powerless, she maintains, is the prescription that they be polite, even when discussing their grievances. "The expression of hatred for your enemies is sometimes the only way to end self-hatred," Jordan writes. "Where there is conflict, conscious termination of self-hatred is the only means to rational possibilities of love." She also muses, "In the context of tragedy, all polite behavior is a form of self-denial." But upon reading Piven's latest book and becoming excited by its ideas, Jordan reasons, "What the hell; friendship is not a tragedy; we can be polite," and she calls her friend to talk politics. □

A Union of Cultural Expressions

ALDEN WHITMAN

IMAGES OF LABOR. *Produced by the Bread and Roses Culture Program of District 1199, National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees. Moe Foner, executive editor. Introduction by Irving Howe. Preface by Joan Mondale. The Pilgrim Press. 96 pp. 32 color plates. $29.95. Paper $16.95.*

This unusual and provocative book is one of the many ripples that, over seventy years, have emanated from the great Lawrence, Massachusetts, textile strike of 1912. That historic struggle, conducted by the Industrial Workers of the World, not only brought together a galaxy of labor figures—including William D. Haywood, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Mary Heaton Vorse, Alice Hamilton and Carlo Tresca—but it also affected the work of such imaginative writers as Mike Gold and E.L. Doctorow. And an offhand phrase—"bread and roses"—that summarized the strikers' goal has recently been adopted and transformed by one of our small but imaginative national unions.

The idea that a union should provide more for its members than good contracts has been pursued by District 1199, National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, for many years; two years ago it was formalized in a Bread and Roses Culture Program, the only one of its kind in the United States. Funded by the union, private foundations and grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the program has already staged an impressive variety of cultural projects for its members.

Last year, Moe Foner, the district's

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executive secretary and the Sol Hurok of the Bread and Roses Program, conceived the notion of asking thirty-two American artists to react in their mediums to an equivalent number of statements about labor by an array of Americans whose thinking has influenced the workers' cause. One of the results is a two-year exhibition of the art, scheduled to open April 15 at Gallery 1199, the union's showcase, at its Manhattan headquarters. Another result is this 9-inch by 12-inch book. It contains full color reproductions of the thirty-two art works, each facing the page on which is printed the evocative quotation. The book will also serve as a catalogue for the exhibit, which will travel the country starting in September under the sponsorship of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service.

The thirty-two quotations are all intended to celebrate workers, or work. They have been taken from such sources as the Book of Job ("Man is born to labor and the birds to fly") and the remarks of Woody Guthrie, Abraham Lincoln, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, George Meany, Walter Reuther, Joe Hill, Eleanor Roosevelt, Frances Perkins, Philip Murray, John L. Lewis, Martin Luther King Jr., Eugene V. Debs, Mother Jones, Mark Twain, Carl Sandburg and Thomas Jefferson. The list contains no surprises and it appears to imply that the labor movement is legitimate because it has the endorsement of so many celebrities, past and present. I am disturbed by the patronizing air that endorsement by a famous name suggests: it creates a picture of labor being patted on the head and commended for its good manners. The working class exists by right and not because Frances Perkins happened to like it.

This lamentable impression is reinforced by the overall banality of the quotations that some diligent researchers have dug up and presented without any indication of their source or the circumstances of their utterance. "Power concedes nothing without a demand," Frederick Douglass is credited with saying. "Intelligent discontent is the mainspring of civilization," is the statement from Eugene V. Debs. Eleanor Roosevelt says, unexceptionally, "Women, as well as men, were given minds to use and the ability to develop skills in various ways." The Gomperism is, "So long as there is one man who seeks employment and cannot find it, the hours of work are too long."

The book's best quotations are the few spontaneous ones, such as this from the Akron, Ohio, sit-down strike of 1936:

> We were nervous and we didn't know we could do it. Those machines had kept going as long as we could remember. When we finally pulled the switch and there was some quiet, I finally remembered something . . . that I was a human being, that I could stop those machines, that I was *better* than those machines anytime.

In that quotation you hear the voice of labor fighting back at exploitation. There is outrage in the bad manners it took to pull the switch; it is vigorous, honest and principled. If *Images of Labor* had been made up of thirty-two such quotations, it would have been an unalloyed triumph. Or of quotations such as this one from Roberto Acuna, whom I take to be a farm worker:

> when people have melons or cucumbers or carrots or lettuce, they don't know how they got on their table and the consequences to the people who picked them. If I had enough money I would take busloads of people out to the fields and into the labor camps. Then they'd know how that fine salad got on their table.

Or this wonderfully militant quote from the ineffable Mother Jones:

—Anonymous worker during the nation's first sit-down strike, in an Akron, Ohio, rubber factory in 1936.

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I live in the United States, but I do not know exactly where. My address is wherever there is a fight against oppression. My address is like my shoes; it travels with me. I abide where there is a fight against wrong.

The text's illustrations are by such artists as Paul Davis, Seymour Chwast, Milton Glaser, Bill King, Jack Beal, Jacob Lawrence, Alice Neel, Judy Chicago, Robert Arneson and Ed Sorel. Of their merits as art I do not feel qualified to speak, but I found only a few to be evocative of the spirit of the quotations. Alice Neel's depiction of Frances Perkins's face did not speak to me about labor, nor did Bill King's symbolic matchstick Lincoln; Robert Arneson's Samuel Gompers is strictly a clay caricature; James McMullan's Joe Hill is poster idealization of a smiling face and one-dimensional; Judy Chicago's Rose Schneiderman is patently more vaginal than labor; Ed McGowin's Mother Jones lacks Mother Jones, while Anita Siegel's Eugene Debs reflects none of his fire. The best of the lot—and this is strictly from the perspective of whether the art mirrors or extends the quotation—are Brad Holland's massive Martin Luther King Jr., Sue Coe's oversize Akron sit-down striker, May Stevens's strong Lucy Parsons and Paul Davis's Job. The others do not carry much clout.

What does is Irving Howe's vigorous introduction, and his call for "workers and their unions . . . to be far more prominent in our cultural expression than they are." A veteran union member, Howe argues that "the working class, both as an actuality and as an idea, has never been . . . adequately reflected in American culture," a state he blames in part on "the dominant myth" of individualism. Although this argument begs the question of how "our incorrigible nostalgia for an earlier, simpler America" has been manipulated against labor, he concludes that yesterday no longer exists and that "unions form a backbone of social strength." Ultimately, he says, "the centrality of the American working class" should be recognized in our cultural experience.

District 1199's Bread and Roses Program is certainly a move in that direction, and *Images of Labor* is another, if halting, step along the way. The concept of depicting American labor as a multiplicity of voices and tonalities is certainly valid and attractive; equally, the idea of reinforcing that picture through art is excellent. Together, the two notions must have seemed compelling—as indeed they are.

But enthusiasm for ideas, even brilliant ones, is not a sufficient guarantee of success. What is missing from *Images of Labor* is a guiding intelligence that would have unified the book and given it focus, coherence and a consistent point of view. District 1199's heart is in the right place; its next book will doubtless be better. □

'His Father and His Face'

JEROLD S. AUERBACH

THE ENIGMA OF FELIX FRANKFURTER. *By H. N. Hirsch. Basic Books. 253 pp. $14.95.*

Anyone unfamiliar with the American cult of legal piety may be puzzled by the discomfort that *The Enigma of Felix Frankfurter* is likely to elicit within the priesthood. Every law student knows that among the holy relics are triptychs of the patron saints of twentieth-century jurisprudence. One, glowing with the veneration of age, contains portraits of Holmes, Brandeis and Cardozo. The other, its luster rapidly tarnishing, depicts Black, Douglas and Frankfurter (whose halo has now virtually disappeared).

H. N. Hirsch, a Harvard political scientist, is the newest iconoclast. Wisely, he avoids the minutiae of constitutional (or is it canonical) textual analysis, the shallow psychological categories of the legal realists and the titillating gossip of *The Brethren*. Instead, from within a framework that is supported by the work of Erik Erikson and especially Karen Horney, Hirsch explores the Frankfurter enigma, discovers "a textbook case of a neurotic personality" and suggests that Frankfurter "can only be understood politically if we understand him psychologically."

The enigma was evident in Frank-

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urter's difficult personal relationships, his ardent patriotism and his convoluted judicial ideology. As the author demonstrates, Frankfurter's self-described mastery of "personalia"—the art of handling people—was largely a combination of overbearing domination and obsequious flattery. An immigrant Jew, he struggled to repudiate "his father and his face" by cultivating the approval of Brahmin culture. A staunch defender of due process for despised radicals (especially Sacco and Vanzetti) before his appointment to the Supreme Court, he consistently preferred judicial restraint to judicial protection of civil liberties once he was on the bench.

Beneath the enigma lurked a startling disparity between Frankfurter's actions and self-assessments. Hirsch has spotted the contradictions: "He claimed not to have sought disciples at Harvard; he did. He claimed not to have placed people in Washington during the New Deal; he did. He claimed not to have lobbied for votes on the Supreme Court; he did." Frankfurter persistently flattered his powerful elders (Stimson, Holmes, Brandeis, Roosevelt), yet he expressed his loathing of "Jewish self-seekers" and reserved capital punishment for "the fawners and flatterers of those in power." So, too, he excoriated his judicial brethren for their "political" judgments while he read his own preferences into the Constitution, insisting that he applied only reasoned analysis.

Hirsch offers a compelling psychological explanation. Frankfurter's precarious identity, formed during his early years in Washington and Cambridge, was devastated by his father's death, a difficult romance (with the daughter of a Congregationalist minister), career uncertainties and the shocking hostility of the Brahmin establishment to Brandeis's nomination to the Supreme Court—all within a two-year period. Frankfurter confronted "a fundamental ambiguity about his place in the world": could he join the Brahmin club, or would he remain the Jewish outsider?

Frankfurter's wartime service in Washington, culminating with his attendance at the Paris Peace Conference, enabled him to rebuild his self-image by idealizing his achievements. "A middle-level bureaucrat in Washington, he believed the future of American industrial relations rested with him; a minor functionary in Paris, he believed the fate of Jews and therefore the peace of the world was in his hands. He began to think of himself as a symbol—of disinterested truth-seeking, of righteous tolerance." Thereafter, Frankfurter craved victory to sustain his inflated self-image. On the Harvard faculty, as Roosevelt's adviser and especially on the Supreme Court, he denigrated those who resisted his domination, while defending his own superior expertise and judgment. Expected (and expecting) to dominate the Supreme Court, he was imprisoned by personal acrimony and by the internal contradictions of his own ideological rigidity.

Even before Frankfurter was appointed to the Supreme Court, he was this century's most powerful and conspicuous Jew in the American courts. But as such, he was simultaneously lured by opportunity and tormented by conflict as he moved beyond his community. So he found uneasy solace in the trappings of privilege and the symbols of court life. Frankfurter, struggling to elude "his father and his face," adopted Holmes and Roosevelt as his gods and worshipped at the altar of law and patriotism.

If there was a measure of self-loathing in his subservience, as there surely was, it was not entirely self-imposed. He was, after all, the first Jew hired by his Wall Street law firm (whose partner urged him to change his name), and the first to teach at Harvard (whose president favored a quota on the admission of Jewish students). He had reason to be unsettled by the trauma of Brahmin and elite bar opposition to the Brandeis nomination. It raised "deep moral issues" for Frankfurter, who closely identified with Brandeis and could hardly help wondering whether even the most impeccable credentials bestowed immunity from anti-Semitism.

At considerable personal cost, Frankfurter did manage to exorcise his demons of self-doubt. Soon after his appointment to the Supreme Court, however, the flag-salute cases exposed his unresolved identity issues, leaving deep wounds that never healed. Frankfurter came to the bench anticipating his greatest triumph. Not only was he the renowned constitutional expert, his professional lifetime of disinterested study was balanced by his intimate knowledge of the inner Supreme Court, the hidden world of the brethren as revealed to him by Holmes and Brandeis. But the flag-salute cases trapped Frankfurter in a tangled web of personal and judicial contradictions. Instead of victory he experienced frustration and defeat, which triggered his acrimony and locked him into untenable jurisprudential rigidities.

Ironically, a persecuted religious minority, the Jehovah's Witnesses, was Frankfurter's nemesis. They presented the Court with an issue—disobedience to a compulsory flag-salute statute—that "resonated on every level, personally and jurisprudentially," for Frankfurter. "Every fiber of his being—his patriotism, his devotion to the symbols of American life, his belief in judicial deference to the majority will, his ambivalence toward religion . . . and his desire to appear 'disinterested'—coalesced" in the flag-salute cases. As Frankfurter explained with eloquent passion when the Court reversed itself over his bitter dissent: "One who belongs to the most vilified and persecuted minority in history is not likely to be insensible to the freedoms guaranteed by our Constitution." But an uneasy Jew, eager to abandon his forebears in his adopted land, was not likely to elevate religious obligation or identity above the prevailing standard

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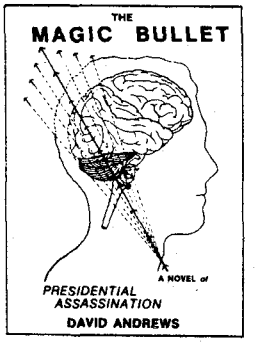

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of constitutional orthodoxy. The only issue, Frankfurter insisted, was legislative reasonableness; his "purely personal attitude" was irrelevant.

In fact, Frankfurter's personal priorities conquered constitutional theory at the instant of his denial. Not only was patriotism Frankfurter's religion, he elevated it to preferred status while asserting the contradictory virtue of judicial self-restraint. In the process, as Hirsch notes wryly, he completely misread Holmes, whom he still needed psychologically as a constitutional mentor. Frankfurter's personal predilections, not some abstract constitutional mandate, were controlling. They blinded him to the possibility that judicial deference to legislative regulation of commerce could be reconciled with judicial protection of civil liberties. Frankfurter's faith in a rational political process, like his assumptions about an open marketplace of ideas, led him to defend an outmoded theory of adjudication for twenty years, long after the constitutional issues that inspired it had vanished from the Supreme Court docket.

As Frankfurter's influence on the Court waned, his relations with colleagues deteriorated. Flattery failed him; outmaneuvered politically, he vilified his opponents for their political machinations. Hirsch leaves us with the sad portrait of an embittered judge, struggling desperately to win favor in law schools as he lost it on the Warren Court. Just as he had hand-picked his "boys" for the New Deal, he selected them to write his version of constitutional history and hagiography. But the muse of history is not easy to control. Twenty years later, the lives of the saints remain unwritten, except by scholars like Hirsch, whose independence provides fresh insights that illuminate the complex, fallible Justices who interpret our most sacred text.

Hirsch properly disclaims any attempt to reduce Frankfurter's jurisprudence to "the content of his psyche." His exploration of the Frankfurter enigma is riveting, but his psychological emphasis severely diminishes the political content of Frankfurter's jurisprudence. Hirsch would not deny the subtle interaction between politics and psychology but the link between them is still missing from his analysis. Fortified by his valuable insights, however, it may now be possible for other historians to connect the psychology of judges to the inherently conservative politics of law. □

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THEATER.

RICHARD GILMAN

More than thirteen years have passed since I gave up reviewing theater on any sort of regular basis and I find it hard to say why I should want to resume it now. An economic motive? *The Nation* pays its contributors mostly with love. Blandishments from a theatrical scene more ample, various and exciting than it was when I relinquished my two-on-the-aisle? More ample and various, no doubt, but hardly more exciting. The theater, or at least drama, is in one of its perennial imaginative slumps, in this country at any rate. Germany is clearly the place now,

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with pockets of strength in Eastern Europe. Even England seems to have regained some energy, with a group of new playwrights more inventive and passionate than their American counterparts.

Well, if domestic offerings don't sustain me (there's always the occasional surprise) I can probably keep going through this three- or four-month stint by writing about works from abroad. One of the notable differences between the theatrical situation in New York when I was reviewing for *Commonweal, Newsweek* and *The New Republic* in the 1960s is the far greater number of new plays and productions that now find their way here from Europe and elsewhere, some of them with amazing speed.

And then there is the mighty increase in revivals of classics from the "modern" repertory. I remember once writing that at the rate Ibsen was done in this country it would take forty or fifty years for us to see the thirteen prose plays, with an outside chance of getting *Brand* and *Peer Gynt*, too. Yet within a couple of months we've had *John Gabriel Borkman*, *The Wild Duck* and *Little Eyolf* in New York City and *Hedda Gabler* at Yale. We've also had a great deal more than in the past of Chekhov, Pirandello, Brecht, Buechner, Wedekind and Strindberg, with the latter's *The Father* about to open at The Circle in the Square.

This is one aspect of what I mean by amplitude (the quality of the revivals is something else again). Another element is the astonishing proliferation of theaters and theater companies, of spaces where people are doing theatrical work of one or another reasonable or bizarre kind. When I began reviewing twenty years ago, Off Broadway had only recently come into existence (I can remember when The Living Theater and The Circle in the Square were the only two established places that weren't Broadway), and Off Off Broadway was yet to take shape. Now the "offs" have multiplied; the physical scene for theater stretches toward the

For the next several months, Richard Gilman will write about the theater for The Nation. *A member of the Yale School of Drama faculty, he is a winner of the George Jean Nathan award for drama criticism and the author of* Decadence: The Strange Life of an Epithet *(Farrar, Straus & Giroux).*

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Nominations and Citations

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The Transit of Venus — Shirley Hazzard
(Viking Press)

In language that is at once lush and finely tooled, Shirley Hazzard's meticulously made novel traces the arc of a woman's life as it passes through love to betrayal to resignation to renewal. **The Transit of Venus** is a work that combines telescopic breadth with a microcosmic precision of detail and insight.

The Second Coming — Walker Percy
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

With a philosopher's passion for ideas, and with a storyteller's insistence on the authentication of ideas in a particular human context, Walker Percy has written a moral drama of great intelligence, beauty and lasting significance. **The Second Coming** explores what may be the central question for modern man: in the absence of faith, what can we believe and what can we live for?

Aberration of Starlight — Gilbert Sorrentino
(Random House)

In **Aberration of Starlight**, with the customs, cliches and commodities of the Great Depression, and by means of highly disciplined technique and a sensitive imagination, Gilbert Sorrentino has managed to invest a single, rather commonplace event, and the four very ordinary people involved in it, with a desperate and aching significance and a sadness filled with smiles.

A Confederacy of Dunces — John Kennedy Toole
(Louisiana State University Press)

A Confederacy of Dunces is a richly gifted novel, large in intention, and extraordinarily finished in execution. It is a strange, comic invention which roams around New Orleans in the manner of an instrument that can detect and record everything in its path. The novel was written in the 1960s, and, after the death of the young author in 1969, was still unpublished until it was read by Walker Percy, whose enthusiasm promoted its publication in 1980. We, fortunately, have this novel now — and it will not disappear.

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World Trade Center and the Cloisters.

I look at the theater listings in *The Village Voice* and the *Soho News*. On Thursday, March 19, there were seventeen openings scheduled all over town, plus *Lolita* on Broadway. Doubtless many of them are the first nights of limited weekend runs that so many fringe theatrical enterprises have these days. But still, *seventeen*! I glance at the names of the companies: The Fantasy Factory Theater, The Eccentric Circle Theater, The Nameless Theater. A press release alerts me to a new work of The Abreaction Theater, "in association with Proleptic Productions." Graffiti, statements on T-shirts.

Another press release confirms my suspicion that since I've been away the absurdity—in the straight, dictionary sense—of much theater on the edges has increased. "*Il Papa Pio I*," I read,

> a play of treachery, greed, murder, and intrigue in the Vatican, opens April 2 at N.E.T.W.O.R.K., "Just in time," muse its creators, "for Easter, and the critics to crucify us!" But actually, producer Wayne Feduk expects this four-week tryout to be the final stepping stone to Broadway. In the Bil Vargas drama, set in the immediate future, a Puerto Rican Cardinal is suspiciously elected Pope, and soon discovers he is the target for murder by a group of dissident Cardinals, one of whom is a woman, and another, his best friend, a Rabbi converted Cardinal.

I've quoted this at length for its deliciousness, but perhaps I'm being derisive too soon. Would one, knowing nothing else about it, have rushed twenty-five years ago to see a play whose press agent described it as "a tense, witty drama about a man who can't stand up and another who can't sit down, with one of the men's parents in trash cans"? Still, I can't imagine Bil Vargas as a potential Beckett.

Nor, turning to the establishment and its malfeasances, can I see Peter Shaffer as having become over the years anything more than the skilled, pretentious playwright of large themes and obvious conclusions I always thought him to be. *Amadeus* is one of those Broadway phenomena, the object of esteem *faute de mieux*, the artificial hit, that turns up every season. *Barnum*—a slipshod, perfunctory piece of work in relation to which the circus is much more entertaining and far cheaper—is *Amadeus*'s counterpart. There's an economy of success that operates in the theater, as I suppose it does in other areas, which dictates—through an unconscious conspiracy of theater people, the public and most reviewers—that there will be hits, hot tickets, and that they will be invented when they don't exist naturally.

Of course, much in the theater will always be false or inept or painfully familiar. I egotistically share Bernard Shaw's lament: "I have lavished ideas on the theater; you would think that in my hour of need the wretched institution would have one to offer me." Why, then, do I want to review again? Because the long view I have taken in recent years—in essays, books and teaching—has left me with an itch to get back in the middle of things, if only for a time.

I retain an affection for the live theater, battered though it is—perhaps because it is. I keep an openness to those occasions of pleasure—a performance, a new voice—that come along rarely but are inimitable, restorative. And I guess I have a desire, too, after so many years away from the action, to take on again that function Shaw described when he said that the critic wasn't "the accomplice of the theater's guilty joys" but its "policeman." Ah, but policemen don't only nab malefactors; they help children across streets, give directions to visitors, break up quarrels and, at times, even have a happy lot. □

FILMS.

ROBERT HATCH

City of Women

City of Women is yet another of Federico Fellini's huge satiric machines, an edifice of architectural implausibilities vast enough to accommodate the exuberance of his non sequitur imagination. Of the several he has built, beginning with *La Dolce Vita*, it is, I think, the most resilient. It is the one best designed to serve his abiding interest: the labyrinth of peculiar vocations and impulses that lies beneath the crust of human decorum. Put briefly, the film describes an orgiastic celebration of the female mysteries, with Everyman present in the perilous double role of supercilious trespasser and sacrificial lamb.

In this case, Everyman is Snaporaz, also known as Marcello Mastroianni, and I shall use the latter name hereafter, partly because much of the point and almost all of the jest in the work is associated with Mastroianni's public image as an indefatigable lover, and partly because, without knowing how an Italian might pronounce it or what it might suggest to him, I am wary of the sound of Snaporaz—a misgiving reinforced by the name given to the only other identifiable male in the film, Dr. Xavier Züberkock (Ettore Manni). If this is schoolboy humor, I am not going to endorse it by repetition.

City of Women shimmers with sex omnipresent and unattained. It deals with the symbols and gestures of desire with the obsessions, the folklore, the aberrations, grotesqueries, mishaps follies and exploitation of sexuality, but the act itself goes unconsummated. It may be that Fellini plays this teasing game to express his discontent that an almost universal, potentially gratifying event in the business of life has been subdued by the strategies, ambushes feints and counterattacks that preoccupy our age of sexual freedom.

There is also the fact that Fellini—who said in an interview with Lietta Tornabuoni of *La Stampa* that for him "women are everything"—was born in 1920. He is thus of an age when men and women, are inclined to step back a little from their preoccupation with each other to speculate on what is essentially, and what only conventionally, involved. And, more immediately, the content and tone of the film are shaped by the director's notion of making a movie about feminism, a movement which, he says, an "aging man cannot help . . . regarding with fear and bewilderment."

How he goes about it can scarcely be described, but perhaps the general effect can be conveyed. It occurs in a dream, which begins when the train on which Mastroianni is dozing passes through a tunnel, on the far side of which the dreamer, now refreshed and alert, finds himself responding to the smile of a beautiful woman (Diana the warrior and castrator, Fellini told Tornabuoni) seated opposite him. He follows her to the lavatory, where he behaves impulsively; leaves the train when she does; pursues her through a woods, congratulating himself on the excellence of her buttocks and importuning her for a resumption of the promising lavatorial encounter, and arrives at a hotel where he loses her in a maenadic riot of delegates to a feminist convention.

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Dreams do not progress by *Roberts Rules of Order* and the transactions of his congress resemble a Bruegel kermis. Simultaneously and loudly, the women testify to their experience of sexist tyranny and sexual debasement; skits are performed to illustrate such grievances; parts of the female body are enamed; parts of the male body are denounced and derided; the polyandrous Enderbreith Small arrives with her six husbands and puts them through a brief trained-poodle act that is well received. Somewhere during these proceedings, the presence of Mastroianni becomes generally known.

The picture then plunges into a disoriented, protracted chase typical of nightmares, though they seldom match Mastroianni's as playgrounds for a boisterously unfettered id. He is taken in hand by a mischievous child-woman (Donatella Damiani), who serves thereafter as his enigmatic guide and counselor. He is forced onto roller skates, frightened by a class in self-defense and shot down a tube into a cellar, where he encounters a fleshy janitress who soon has him wrestling among the pots of a greenhouse in a rustic replay of the earlier grappling on the train. He escapes from her into the hands of some teen-age girls in stripped-down cars who are got up in punk war-paint and are high on something, perhaps only the boredom of adolescence. They are budding feminists and he flees their menacing contempt into the fortified mansion of the aforementioned Dr. Züberkock. The doctor is firing off shotgun blanks in an attempt to hold the young furies at bay until he can celebrate the occasion of his ten thousandth sexual conquest. (I had not the acuity of eye or specialized training to record all the psychoanalytical clues that are strewn through this bedlam. It should be noted, however, that Mastroianni's movement throughout the film is consistently smooth, undulating and involuntary—a style of locomotion that will provoke knowing smirks in any company of Freudian sophisticates.)

With the meeting between Mastroianni, the sly dog of concupiscence, and Manni, the lascivious huntsman, the film enters the other camp of the war between the sexes. The doctor has made his castle into a museum dedicated to the male view of woman as a desirable object. Long corridors display color transparencies of the women he has subjugated, the face of each and the sound of her voice in transport coming to life at the touch of a switch. Mastroianni becomes maudlin with delight as he summons up combinations of these effects. Elsewhere the premises bristle with phallic furnishings, the whole being presided over by the bust of the doctor's saintly mother, before which he tearfully abases himself. Mastroianni runs into his wife (Anna Prucnal) during the evening festivities; she is drunk and treats him to a foul-mouthed tirade for having wasted her life.

The picture continues to pick up speed and I cannot keep the pace. At one point, Mastroianni, with top hat and cane, is strutting through "Let's Face the Music and Dance"; at another, a giant roller coaster spins him along a quick review of his sex life, beginning with a scullery maid under a kitchen table. He lands before a kangaroo court that questions him, finds him guilty of masculinity and dismisses him as negligible. Questing the "ideal woman," he climbs above the roof onto a platform, where a hot-air balloon in the form of Donatella the Virgin lifts him into the sky. But only momentarily, for the "real" Donatella ends the flight with a submachine gun and Mastroianni lands with a start in the train compartment. There he finds his wife, along with the Diana who started the adventure (Bernice Stegers) and Donatella Damiani, now in her true guise as a schoolgirl. All of them smile at him as women sometimes do when they have exposed the urchin in a man. The train enters another tunnel and the screen credits come on.

How militant women will take this rough handling of their cause I hardly know. Fellini, who did preparatory field work at feminist gatherings, maintains that he has not invented a single word of the guerrilla rhetoric; he denies that the film is caricature, but admits that condensation is a kind of exaggeration. He has shown feminists in their most provocative and abrasive attitudes, but then has provided them with Mastroianni's patronizing lubricity and Manni's berserk body counting—as confirmation of the worst the women claim. Asked by the interviewer which side he is on, Fellini replied, "I am just a tourist, a passer-by. I am in Studio 5 in Cinecittà, where I belong." That perhaps explains the ambiguous tone of the big social satires—*La Dolce Vita, Roma, Satyricon, Casanova*—that has stirred up controversy.

As a thoughtful man of his times, Fellini is disturbed by the deformations of the society around him, but as an artist he seizes jubilantly on these excesses for the cinematic scope they provide. He confessed in the interview that "when the time came to shoot the film . . . everything I had learned about women's destiny . . . cynically materialized into light, color and makeup." That suggests an esthetic amorality that can get under the skin of partisans, but Fellini does himself scant justice. The hilarious and outrageous extremes—into which he is drawn by his delight in what absurdities the camera can devise—are themselves a kind of admonition. *City of Women* is a combat film which in its closing passages suggests that the war cannot be won by force, but may possibly be resolved by arbitration. As he pointed out to Tornabuoni, Fellini shows a ray of light at the end of the tunnel. □

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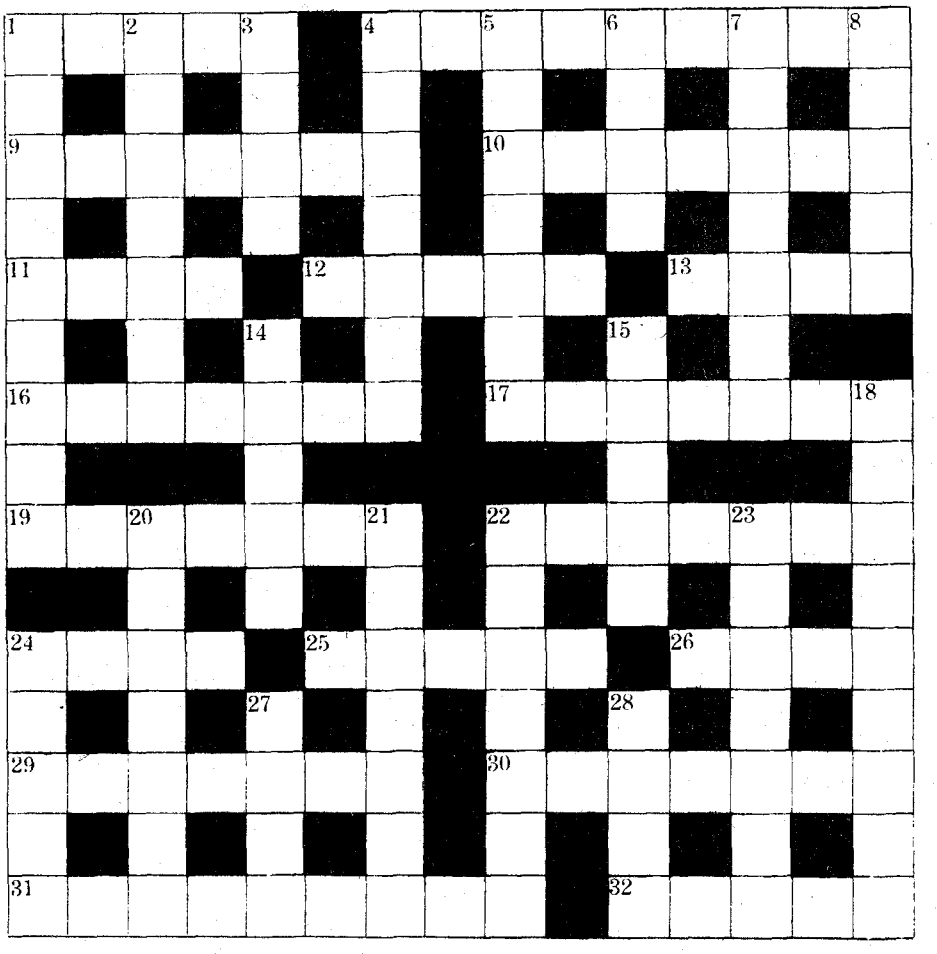
Crossword Puzzle No. 1863

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 It might be a roll of money, as some say. (5)
4 Would such a friend a-board warrant "you look good enough to eat"? (9)
9 Automobile not at home, furnishing the seed of 1 across, perhaps. (7)
10 They certainly aren't secretive, but they evidently count. (7)
11, 12 and 13 Edit, for example, what happens a couple of times a day, usually. (4,2,3,4)
16 The old man's nuts, obviously! (7)
17 There's an imperfection about a number, so turn aside. (7)
19 In the nick of what the cook considers his or her domain? (7)
22 Does one make plans for a large number in "Cheers!", as they might be? (7)
24, 25 and 26 Such a suit wouldn't get completely pressed in a day—in fact, you might have trouble fitting a suit in! (9,4)
29 Help back the degree of speed about it that shows what a heater might do. (7)
30 Correspondingly "right away"? (7)
31 Hamlet worried about the fact that such sleep might be impossible. (9)
32 The well-known result of Edward's demise. (5)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

DOWN

1 Acquaduct's financiers might possibly go over the steps again. (9)
2 Tympanum—or one of the things Antony asked for on the bongo. (7)
3, 14 and 27 Likely to be found if ducks are kept there—but an early question arose as to how're you gonna keep 'em! (4,2,3,4)
4 Such financial returns don't *have* to be illegal. (3-4)
5 Wild cat held with certain security measures taken. (7)
6, 15 and 28 A New York accent with such? It is at least temporarily 32. (4,2,3,4)
7 The ancestry of *Apoidea*? You must get it straight! (7)
8 *En suite* without it? Follow in order, obviously. (5)
14 See 3 down
15 See 6 down
18 A sort of 32 term, but on the rack, possibly. (9)
20 A red-letter beginning, changed where you might want to put your foot down. (7)
21 *Sophisticated Lady* probably doesn't have it. (7)
22 Rather formal differences of opinion. (7)
23 Most like certain cinematic streets? (7)
24 Circle a radical fitted out for the resultant row? (5)
27 See 3 down
28 See 6 down

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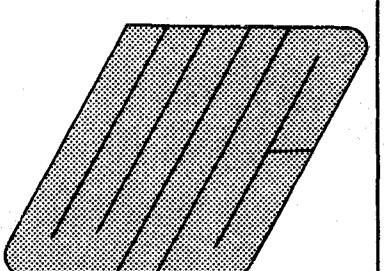

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